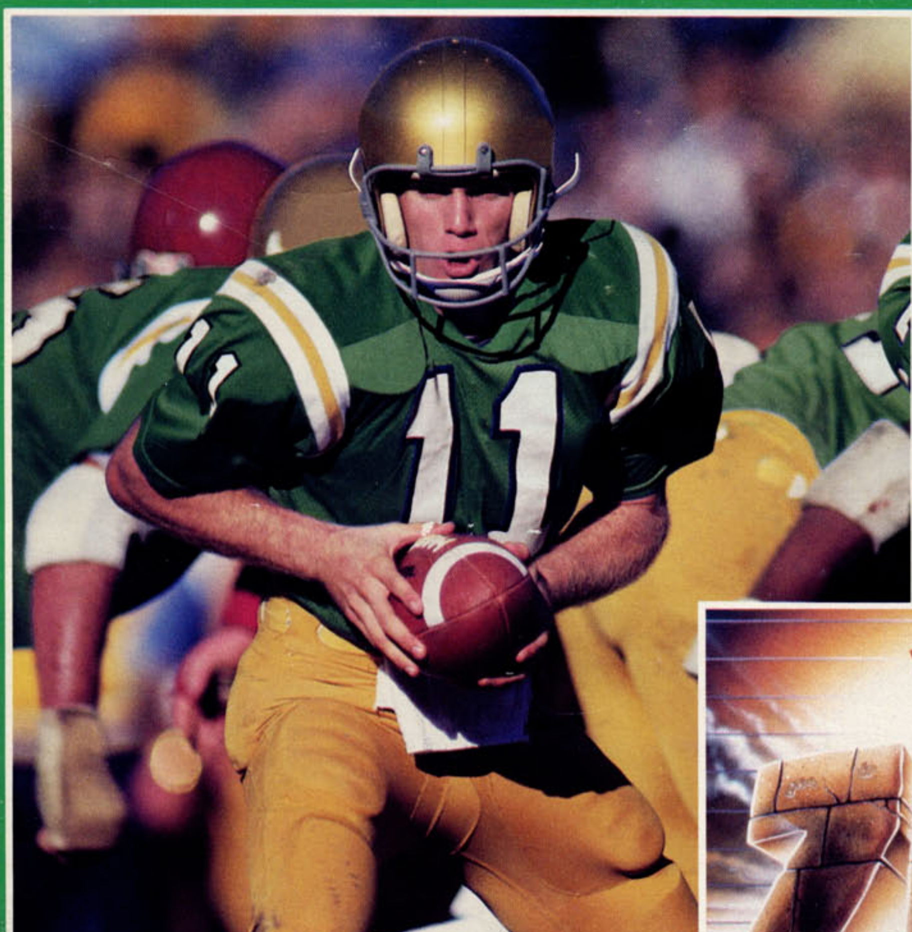
# COMPUTER Gaming World

December 1987
Number 42
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Gamestar's Championship Football

## Special Football Issue




Infocom's Beyond Zork

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**Also In This Issue: Stealth Fighter**
**Plundered Hearts • Game of the Year Awards**



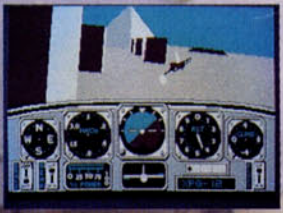
# "Finally, The Right Stuff"

**–NY Times** *(Aug. 25, 1987)*

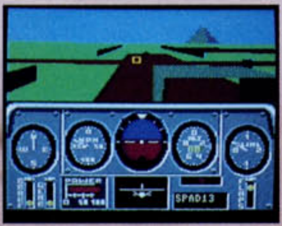
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COMPUTER Gaming World

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Number 42

## FEATURES



## DEPARTMENTS



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Psalm 9:1-2

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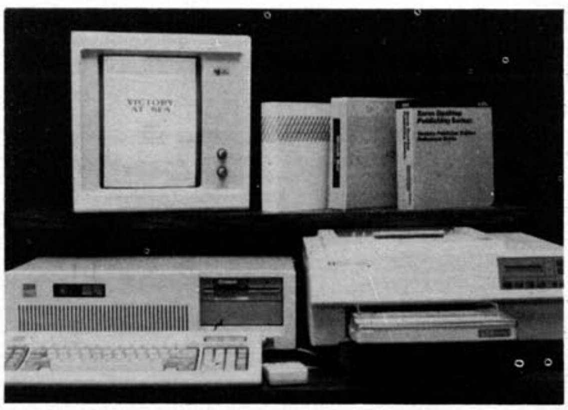
« Circle Reader Service #40

# Editorial

An old adage says "don't let the grass grow under your feet." Successful magazine publishers live by this admonition. In an ongoing quest to maintain membership in that select club (i.e. successful magazine publishers) we have constantly looked for more efficient means to produce a better product for you, our readers.

In 1987 we completely revamped the format and layout of Computer Gaming World and we are delighted with the results.

The first big change was the now legendary "machine specific column massacre". In one fell swoop columns died right and left. It was a bloody scene, but someone had to do it! Unlike the early 1980's when single or two machine titles were commonplace, game manufacturers now release the majority of their titles on four or more machines. The need for specific machine columns disappeared, for the most part, with this change. The space gained by this change has been put to good use according to the letters we receive.


*Golden Empire Publications' Desktop Publishing System*

Concurrent with the pruning of columns was the adoption of themes for each issue (the current issue is our "Football Issue"). This was a marketing move and we are pleased to say, a move that has paid off in increased sales.

Next, the layout went through significant changes. Up through Issue #38 (June-July 1987) CGW was produced in the traditional method of pasting up galley sheets of type. However, this is the era of desktop publishing. In July we joined the revolution and went "desktop". Upgrading to the **IBM AT**, the Hewlett Packard **LaserJet** series II printer, and the Micro Display Systems **The Genius 401** full page display monitor, we jumped into desktop publishing with Xerox's **Ventura Publisher**.

The results first appeared in Issue #39 (Aug-Sept 1987). Not only did the magazine look better, the time to produce each issue dropped by 15% and our pre-press production costs went down by 25%. Now, let me guess—when you read that we have been able to cut the cost of production on CGW you say to yourself "so what? I don't see you lowering *my* cost!" Well, you are right. In fact, the price actually went *up* with Issue #40. The culprits here are inflation and a sizable increase in paper cost this year. Nevertheless,our constant quest to reduce production costs while improving the magazine at the same time explains, in part, why we are the only four-color computer game magazine still around when once there were eighteen such magazines (1984). So, be excited that we are more efficient now! Our gain is your gain! CGW marches on!

**Microsoft Word** and our subscription to **Compuserve** round out the basic tools that we use to produce each issue of CGW. A good portion of each issue is sent to us via Compuserve. The remainder comes to us on diskette as IBM text files. The articles are edited using Word and then transferred to Ventura Publisher.

In Issue #40 (October 1987) we introduced our new logo. The combination of a bold traditional typeface used for the word "COMPUTER" (that harkens back to the older logo style) has been combined with a new free-flowing treatment of the words "GAMING WORLD." The resulting logo suggests the dynamic tension between the traditional and the progressive that exists, not only in CGW's editorial personality, but also in the computer entertainment industry overall.

Yet another change appears with the issue you hold in your hand. Departing from a traditional Times Roman typeface, which is common to so many publications, we have adopted a new progressive, attractive typeface called Korinna®. We like it, what do you think?

Stay tuned. More improvements are on the way!

Russell Sipe
Publisher and Editor

## Microprose Censorship Update

The hearing on West Germany's ban on the sales of *Gunship* was held on September 30-October 1, 1987. The crowds were so thick that the hearing had to be moved to a larger facility. **Microprose** lost their attempt to appeal *Silent Service*'s ban because their licensee had been properly notified, even if the U.S. company was not. With regard to *Gunship*, however, the company still has hope. The company raised several challenges of procedures by the censoring commission. For example, commission members are supposed to decide these issues independently prior to the meeting where the vote is to take place and this was not done. Additionally, members are supposed to actually view the disputed products, but the present commission only viewed videotapes of the product. The final decision on *Gunship* has now been postponed until, at least, December 10th.

# TAKING A PEEK

ActionSoft
201 W. Springfield Ave. Suite 711
Champaign, IL 61820

THUNDERCHOPPER: One of many recent releases of helicopter simulations, this simulation is lovingly crafted to reflect the controls and weaponry of an advanced Hughes 530MG Defender. The detail in this product, supervised by a veteran Air Force gunship pilot, is phenomenal. Apple, C-64 ($29.95). Circle Reader Service #1.

Activision
P. O. Box 7287
Mountain View, CA 94039

POSTCARDS: If you liked the PAPER MODELS interface, you will love POSTCARDS. This isn't a game, but it is entertainment. Ever wanted to create your own silly postcards? This product offers enough clip art, bizarre backgrounds, and catchy captions to keep all of your correspondents in stitches (or all of your enemies angry!). Apple, C-64, IBM ($24.95), Apple IIGS, Mac ($29.95). Circle Reader Service #2.

Broderbund Software
17 Paul Drive
San Rafael, CA 94903-2101

WINGS OF FURY: Here's your chance to one-up that land-based "Black Sheep Squadron." Power-up your carrier-based F6F Navy Hellcat and find the nearest Imperial Japanese target. This is definitely more of an arcade game than combat flight simulation. Apple II w/ 128K req. ($34.95). Circle Reader Service #3.

California Dreams
780 Montague Expwy., Suite 403
San Jose, CA 95131

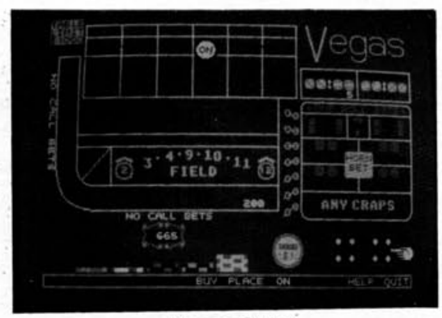
VEGAS CRAPS: From the colorful dice, graphics and table to the audible click of the chips as one places bets on the table, this game is as addictive as the gambling bug itself. The only missing feature is that there is no option for multi-player interaction as there is on a real table. Apple II, C-64 ($29.95), Atari ST ($34.95), Amiga, Apple

## Advertisers





Thunderchopper



Vegas Craps



Postcards



Vegas Gambler


Wings of Fury


Inside Trader

IIGS, and IBM ($39.95). Circle Reader Service #4.

VEGAS GAMBLER: Players will swear they are in a casino when they see the Video Poker screen in this product. This product also contains a simulated Slot Machine with five coin pay-off lines, a digitized Blackjack table, and computer Roulette table with authentic layout. Apple II, C-64 ($29.95), Atari ST ($34.95), and Amiga, Apple IIGS, IBM ($39.95). Circle Reader Service #5.

Cosmi
415 N. Figueroa
Wilmington, CA 90744

INSIDE TRADER: This game has more market crashes than Wall Street had in October, 1987. Don't be put off by the "authentic stock trading game" billing, this one offers a "real-time" element that is fun and challenging. Correlation with real market conditions is only coincidental, however. IBM ($24.95). Circle Reader Service #6.

SHIRLEY MULDOWNEY'S TOP FUEL CHALLENGE: Like many other racing games presently on the market, this one allows the player to set-up the car for each of several events and the special circumstances surrounding them. It also has a cockpit view suggestive of a three-dimensional perspective and a separate "track conditions" sequence. C-64 ($24.95). Circle Reader Service #7.

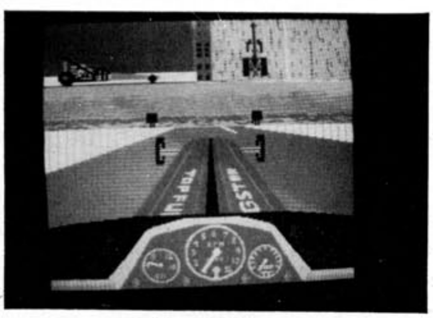
Datasoft
19808 Nordhoff Place
Chatsworth, CA 91311

BISMARCK - THE NORTH SEA CHASE: An action-strategy game that plays on several different levels. The strategic elements call for optimal deployment of British ships, the use of different screens to reflect various battle stations is reminiscent of DESTROYER (from Epyx), and the action screens offer a more colorful presentation than earlier games on this subject. C-64 ($29.95). Circle Reader Service #8.

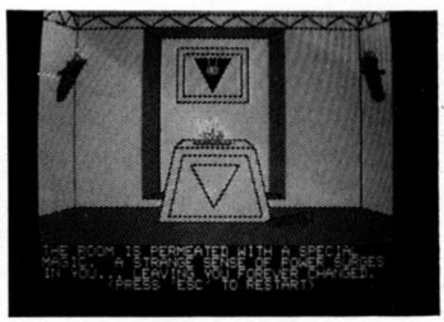
DARK LORD: No, players do not face Darth Vader in this game. This is an animated alternate world adventure. The alternate world, appropriately enough, is named Alterworld. Players do have to vanquish the evil Warlord, Nequam, however. Apple, C-64 ($19.95). Circle Reader Service #9.

FORCE 7: Only one crew member

*Continued on pg. 60*



Shirley Muldowney




Dark Lord



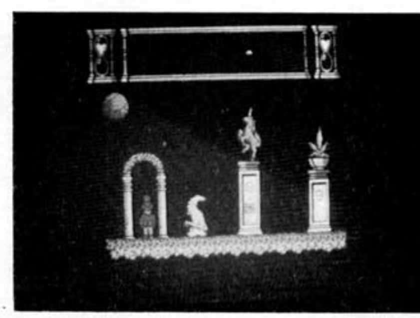
Street Sports Basketball



Bismarck



Force 7

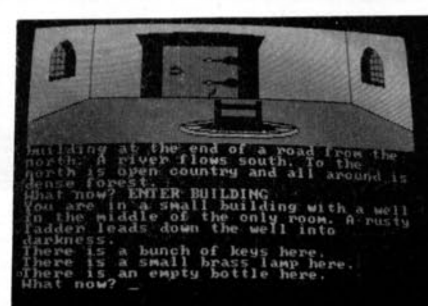


Heartland

## A Rare Retraction

### (Collector's item, clip and save)

In last issue's Christmas Buyers Guide the **Holiday Stocking** gift assortments from *Mindscape* were listed at $39.95. Mindscape's Karen Novak has informed us that the correct price is **$24.95 per assortment**. Sorry about that Karen! We feel so much better now that we have "come clean"!




Jewels of Darkness

# NBA FRANCHISES AVAILABLE: RATES REASONABLE!

(REQUIREMENTS: Knowledge of professional basketball. Capable of dealing with giants. Ability to handle high-pressure situations. Must bring own temper.)

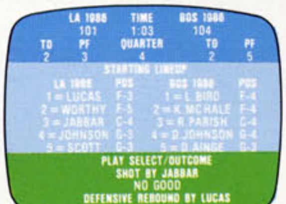
## Can YOU do the job?

Find out if you have what it takes in **NBA,** the animated stat-based basketball game. Take control of Larry Bird, Dominique Wilkins, Michael Jordon, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and Bob Cousey. Pick the starting line-ups, send in substitutes and call for the fast break and full-court press. **NBA** takes into account everything that occurs on court. On offense, you call the play. Choose the sequence of passes, but be careful: it increases the chance of two points, but also can lead to a steal or blocked shot. Work the outside, or just go for the three-pointer. On defense, set up outside or close to the basket, go for the rebound, or turn on the pressure and try for a steal. A good NBA coach has to work the bench as well as the floor. Each player's stamina is rated by the number of minutes he can play. Use up your starter too early in the game, and you'll have to send in a sub during those final crucial minutes, and that could turn an overwhelming victory into a closely-contested defeat.

**From the designers of Super Sunday, NBA is the first and only fully-animated statistically-accurate basketball game on the market, coming in like a fast break with the following features:**

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- **20 GREAT TEAMS** from the 1959-60 Boston Celtics to the four top teams from the 1985-86 season: Boston, Milwaukee, Houston and Los Angeles! In between are some of the greatest teams that ever played the game: the 1966-67 Philadelphia 76ers with Wilt Chamberlain and the classic match-up from the 1969-70 season between the Lakers and the New York Knicks!
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Watch for the release of Accessory disks; **1987 Season** and **GM Disk.**

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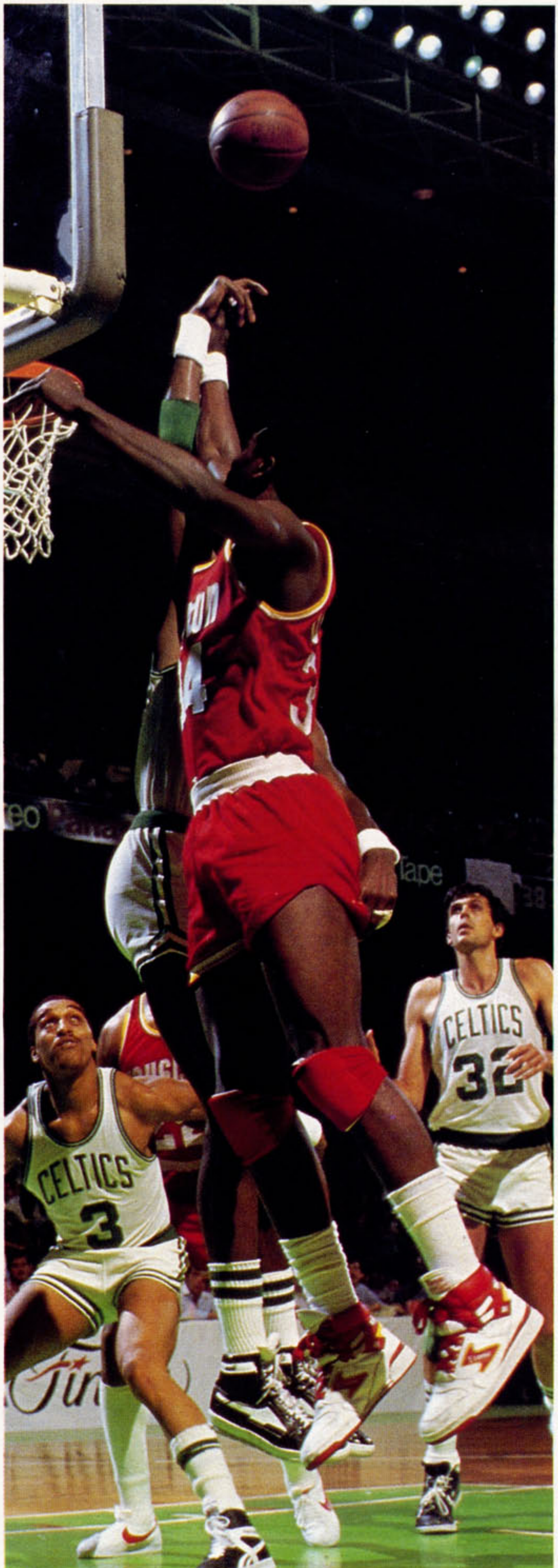
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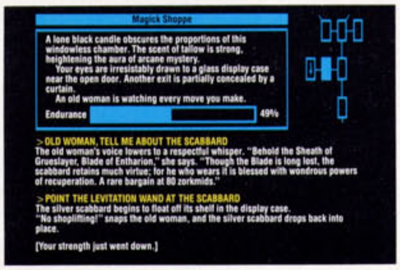





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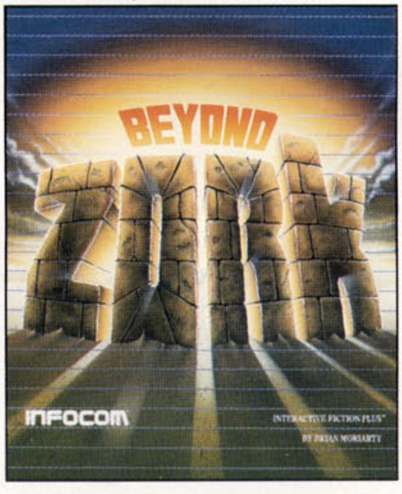
*Beyond Zork's* sophisticated new interface makes interaction more natural than ever, plunging you into a world teeming with magic and peril. The vast and varied Southlands of Quendor come alive as you seek fantastic treasure and combat the vicious monsters who haunt the streets and wastelands.

Challenge yourself to a quest that's far beyond anything you've ever experienced. *Beyond Zork.* The incredible new interactive story from the master storytellers at Infocom.




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*Screen shown is for the Commodore 128 version.*




INFOCOM™

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Beyond Zork *is available at your local dealer for the Apple II series, Macintosh, Commodore 128, Amiga, IBM PC and 100% compatibles, and Atari ST. To order direct, call 1-800-262-6868. Coming soon: Apple IIGS.*

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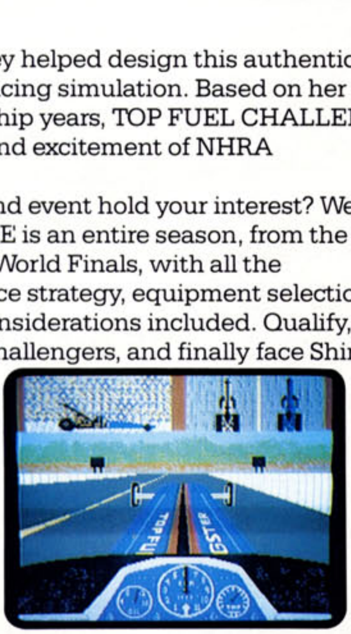



## "TOP FUEL CHALLENGE IS THE CLOSEST YOU CAN GET TO THE HOT PAVEMENT OF THE DRAGSTRIP."

— *Shirley Muldowney*

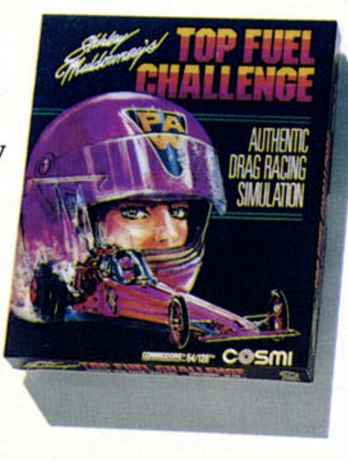
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*Scorpia's Regular hint column visits the Spanish Main in Plundered Hearts.*

Ah yes, it's that time of year again, when desperate shoppers crowd department stores, snowflakes dance on bitter north winds, and the strains of "Plover the River and Frotz the Woods", "Dorn-beasts Roasting on an Open Fire", and "I'm Dreaming of a Dark Cavern"† fill the air. So, step right in, settle down by the fireplace, and feel free to sing along. Just walk carefully past the Christmas Tree Monster in the corner (quite harmless on an individual basis and he does brighten up the place with his swishing tinsel and blinking lights) and don't let Fred's traditional shrunken-head garland on the wall upset you; he gets terribly sentimental during this season. Of course, if you really prefer warmer climes, I have just the place for you: a delightful little resort in the Caribbean, called St. Sinistra .

Right up front, I'll tell you that when I heard **Infocom** was putting out a gak romance adventure, my stomach did flip-flops. This is not to say that romance doesn't have a place, just that its place is not in adventure games. I'm very strong-minded about such things (there are those who would say prejudiced, but of course we aren't going to listen to them). Fortunately, *Plundered Hearts* turned out to be not so bad as I expected. The romantic interludes are few and far between (whew!), and the game overall has some neat, if not too difficult, puzzles. The piracy part, however, is just a bit of gloss, as most of the action takes place on land rather than on the Spanish Main.

In a departure from more typical Infocoms, your character is definitely female. You get no choice here. Still, considering that the lady you portray gets to do most of the rescuing and derring-do in the game, it hardly matters (in fact, you don't have to get very far into the game to realize that the whole thing is really an inverted spoof of traditional romances).

So here you are, on a ship out from London and bound for St. Sinistra in the Caribbean. The name alone should make you think twice, But your dear father is ill and only the sight of his beloved daughter can turn the tide . . . or so you've been told.

Of course, the whole thing is a dastardly plot, invented by the notorious Jean Lafond, governor of St. Sinistra,




who wants nothing more than to get his hot little hands on you. Luckily, before the ship arrives in port, it is attacked by a pirate vessel commanded by the equally-notorious Falcon (Nicholas to his friends).

Nicky sweeps you off to his own ship, allowing you the exclusive use of his cabin, as well as giving you a letter from your father. This missive tells you that Nicky, at least, is trustworthy and a gentleman, whereas Lafond isn't. Believe it.

Daddy dear is actually in the clutches of the perfidious Lafond (which is French for "the bottom;" how appropriate), and Nicky and his pirate friends are off to attempt a rescue. Well, that's what they think, anyway. In reality, it's you who will be doing most of the rescuing here.

Nicky takes off to attend a ball given by the villain, thoughtfully leaving you behind for safety. Naturally, no heroine worthy of the name is going to accept that! So, quick as a wink, you slip out the door where you find a wardrobe that contains clothing more suitable for your upcoming adventures, namely a cabin boy's outfit (no one ever notices the reticule attached to your wrist; perhaps such things are standard gear for cabin boys).

It doesn't take long before you realize that the stairs going up lead to a locked door you can't open (at least, not from this side) and the stairs going down lead to the hold (which also has no exits you can open from this side).

This is rather a ticklish situation, since in the hold you notice that a slow fuse is burning its way towards the kegs of gunpowder stored inside a wire cage. The results of the gunpowder being set off do not bear thinking about.

What to do? I suggest finding a way topside as soon as possible, because there's another nasty situation up there, as well. The ship's anchor has been cut, and the vessel is drifting towards the reefs (this is known as being between a rock and a hard place).

Fortunately, stopping the ship is fairly easy. Simply explore all the top decks for the proper method. There is time for this, because that fuse below is a slow one and the reefs are the more immediate threat (Imagine, a shipload of experienced sailors and not one notices the ship is drifting . . .).

Now, you can concentrate on averting the explosion. Obviously, you have to put out the fire somehow. The lock on the gate can't be picked, and there's no way you can climb over. Examine that gate carefully, however, and you'll see there's a space at the top. Perhaps, that will give you some ideas. Don't be afraid to sacrifice some old clothes for a good cause.

With the ship now saved from treachery (obviously, Lafond must

have had a spy in the crew), you have some time to go through it more thoroughly, picking up all sorts of interesting little items. A chat with Cooky (the ship's cook, of course) would not be amiss.

Ok, time to head for shore. Too bad you can't swim, and no skiffs are available (I guess Nicky took the only one). Still, there is a means of reaching the island, if you're not too picky about your accommodations. Splash!

In no time at all, you reach the lagoon near Lafond's house. Before trying to get inside (front door NOT recommended!), check the exterior carefully. At this point, you have pretty much two choices: go to the ball first and then, rescue Daddy or rescue Daddy first, and then, go to the ball. It doesn't matter which order you go for, as both activities must be completed before you can get further into the game.

Since you're a well-brought-up young lady (which explains why you're running around in men's clothing and doing men's work . . . grin), you'll probably want to rescue Daddy first.

Everyone knows that libraries have secret passages in them (especially libraries in works of romantic fiction!), so you may want to start there. Lafond is a tricky rascal, though, and discovering the mechanism may take some thinking. Don't overlook anything in the room! Try to overcome your good manners and handle things freely. These are desperate times.

Opening the secret passage isn't the only problem. Part of the way along in the nether regions is a crocodile. He is obviously not a pleasant fellow, but there are two ways of dealing with him. One is the fast and daring way that will have him seeing red, and the other is the more genteel method of pleasant dreams. Either one will get you safely past Mr. Jaws.

Daddy won't stick around very long after you get him out. This is just as well, since you have a ball to attend. Of course, you know how to manage that, right? I mean, you did find the gown and you do have the invitation, yes? (If no, shame on you...always look before you throw!!)

In the ballroom, Nicky will dance with you and tell you that so far, he hasn't had much luck finding the dungeon where Daddy was being held (not surprising, if all he's been doing is spending his time here). You can tell him about Daddy if you like.

Your next partner will not be so enchanting: Lafond himself, in person. At last, you get to meet the foul dog behind all this intrigue! It's best not to mention that Daddy isn't down below any more. Just let Lafond have his say, which includes an invitation (or perhaps, an order) to meet him later for a private little supper in his private chambers.




Shortly afterwards, there is a commotion! Nicky is being dragged off by the guards! Tch, how careless of him! Of course we know where he'll end up, but that will have to wait for now, because the butler comes by to tell you that Lafond is expecting you upstairs in his room. Your instincts may be against it, but you really should go. Don't worry, virtue will be triumphant (we hope).

He sure does have a fancy little hideaway, doesn't he? This, of course, is in the great tradition of all egotistical and grandiose villains (there aren't any other kinds), and he talks that way, too.

But what's this? The door slams open! Nicky, wielding a rapier, bursts into the room! Is rescue at hand? Alas no, the dear boy barely manages a few words before Lafond's minions bonk him on the head and drag him off again (in the great tradition of all heroes, Nicky has a hard head, which is probably the only thing that's kept him alive for so long).

Now, it's just you and Lafond. How marvelous. At the moment, his back is turned, and you may wish to try a little underhanded action of your own. Just don't go for the too obvious. Hmmm, that didn't seem to work as expected. Ah well, such is life. Yet, all may not be lost. Although Lafond is hot to trot, I'll bet you can spice things up even more. You could even say a little pinch wouldn't hurt.

Whew! You have managed to save yourself from A Fate Worse Than Death, but the results are only temporary and I wouldn't stick around here if I were you. Besides, there's Nicky down below, waiting for you to rescue him. Before you rush off, though, don't forget the window!

Down in the dungeons again, you find more than just a crocodile in your way. Andy Crulley, the nasty traitor, is tormenting a helpless Nicky with a whip (the standard weapon of all bad guys). Oops! He just noticed you! Well, just don't stand there, defend yourself! Nicky is counting on you and besides, a trip down the hole is definitely one way. "Take that, you blackguard!" you say, "and that!" "Curses, foiled again!" you expect him to respond.

With Andy out of the way for now, freeing Nicky from his chains (and, incidentally, bringing him back to the land of the wide-awake) is simple. Unfortunately, he takes himself far too seriously as a hero (or perhaps he's just embarrassed by his performance so far) and has thoughts for nothing else but sticking it to Lafond. Before you can say, "Sail ho!", Nicky rushes off once more.

Being a little brighter than Nicky, you probably realize that in his shape, he couldn't take on a mosquito, much less one of the best swordsmen going. Looks like you'll just have to haul his ummmmm, posterior out of the fire again.

You arrive just in time, too. Nicky and the Big L are having it out in the ballroom and our boy is not doing too well. An unkind person might even say he's losing. In fact, he just slipped up and is lying flat on the floor with Lafond over him, poised for the death stroke.

Is this the end of our Nicky? Will the

*(Continued on page 14)*

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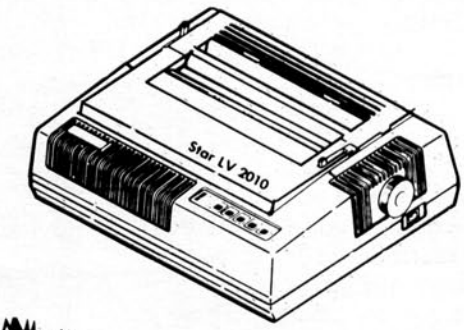
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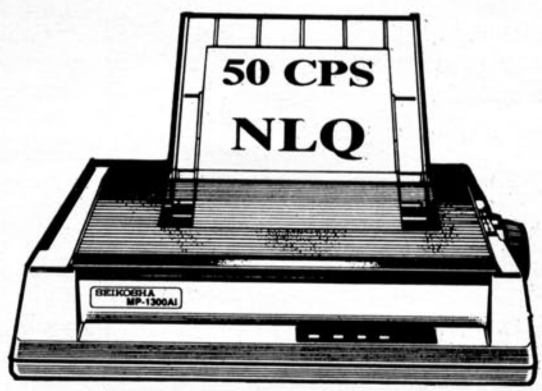
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# Scorpion's Tale

*(Continued from page 11)*

nefarious Lafond prevail? Will the spunky heroine, after all, suffer the dreaded Fate Worse Than Death?

Gee, I sure hope not! All that will come to pass, however, unless you move and move very fast indeed. Just think of the quickest way to get from the balcony to the ballroom. That should do it. Geronimo! (A little anachronistic and certainly not lady-like, but these are desperate times).

Ok! Maybe now you'll be able to get off this island in one piece. Don't bet on it. Daddy is forcibly restraining Nicky from giving Lafond what he deserves (the skunk is out cold on the floor), and urging everyone to leave. Everyone does (Ever notice how you're always being left behind? Makes you wonder, doesn't it?).

So, you hop it after them and no sooner do you reach the cove and the skiff, than who should appear but (you guessed it!) Lafond, with Andy and a bunch of guards in tow. The Big Moment has arrived! The Final Showdown is about to start! Tension! Excitement! Romance!

Yes, even at this penultimate moment, there is some of that romance popping up again. Actually, Nicky just wants to know whether or not you love him. Awww, go on, give the poor slob a break. He certainly needs all the help he can get (as if you didn't know that by now, or even much earlier).

Fortified by your professed love, Nicky puts on a dazzling show of swordsmanship! (How he manages this miracle, given everything that has already happened, especially his inept showing only minutes earlier, will go unremarked).

Nevertheless, even as Lafond is finally skewered once and for all, the scurrilous Crulley is hastily loading his pistol for a potshot at Our Hero. Yes, you're going to have to do it one more time (woman's work is never done . . .).

At last! It's all over! Daddy is free! Nicky is still alive! You have avoided A Fate Worse Than Death! and as the stars twinkle in the dark Caribbean sky, you and Nicky set sail in the Helena Louise (Nicky's ship) for the New World, America in the 1600's (patriotic music swells in the background) . . . hard manual labor . . . unfriendly Indians . . . a pack of squalling brats . . . (pssst! Hey Cooky, what say we dump this twit overboard, take command of the ship, and go beat on some Spanish treasure galleons? . . .).

Well (taking a peek at the old invisible clock on the wall), I'll leave you now to get on with your own festivities of the season. Before you rush off to do that last-minute shopping, though, remember that if you need help with an adventure game, you can reach me in the following ways: on Delphi, visit the GameSIG (under the Groups and Clubs menu); on GEnie, stop by the Games Round-Table (type: Scorpia to reach the Games RT); on The Source, send Smail to ST1030; by US Mail (and I say this every time, and still there are people who don't believe me: if you live in the United States, you MUST enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope to get a reply!): Scorpia, PO Box 338, Gracie Station, New York, NY 10028.

Until next time, happy adventuring!



†Note: "Dornbeasts Roasting on An Open Fire", "Plover the River and Frotz the Woods", and "I'm Dreaming of A Dark Cavern" are copyright 1987 by Infocom, Inc, and may be found, along with other seasonal favorites, in *Beyond Zork*, which, just by the merest coincidence, is reviewed elsewhere in this issue.



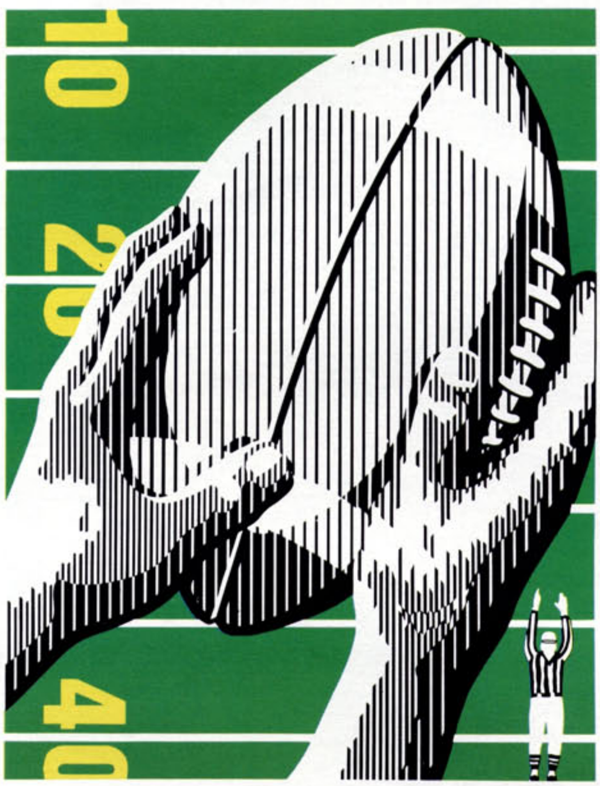
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# THE ELECTRONIC GRIDIRON

*by Wyatt Lee*

The crack of shoulder pads, grunts from linemen, shouted audibles from the quarterback, verbal obscenities from the sidelines, brassy blare from the marching bands, and thunderous roar of the crowd assault our eardrums. We are visually stimulated by the bright rainbow of uniform colors, the psychedelic patterns of the card stunts, and the resplendent glitter of the cheerleaders' pom-poms. It is, despite the cynical efforts of both NFL owners and players, the season of football. It is also the season when disgruntled computer owners tire of second-guessing their college alma mater's coaches or play selection of the alleged professional coaches. It is time to put one's skills and strategy to the test on the electronic gridiron.

Computerized football competition seems to fall into two basic categories: action/strategy and statistics-based strategy. Both categories have much to offer, but the player will have to make the ultimate choice as to which program offers the most for him.





## Action/Strategy

**GFL Championship Football** from Activision's Gamestar division is one of the most revolutionary approaches to the action/strategy game. No other game can offer the fan with no organized football background such an empathetic perspective on the game. The designers refer to this perspective as an "inside the helmet view" and that is exactly what the player receives. The computer screen shows what a quarterback, running back, or wide receiver would see from his helmet. Tired cliches like "finding a hole" which trip easily off an announcer's tongue become meaningful when your offensive line fails to open a hole and the opposing defense buries you. Matters such as "running a pattern" become tremendously significant when your on-screen identity is overthrown or underthrown because he ran an incorrect or imprecise pattern (the program is very unforgiving on this). The graphics present large, smooth-flowing, colorful caricatures of football players within the player's simulated field of vision and this adds to the on-the-field illusion of the game.

Even if the game simply consisted of this perspective, it would be a significant product, but the game has strategic depth to it, as well. Both the offensive and defensive teams have lengthy playlists to select from and the program allows thirty seconds between each play for these decisions to be made simultaneously by joystick input. Unlike most statistics-based games, proper play selection is not the primary key to success. One can select the proper play or defense throughout the game and still lose because of poor execution.

If this was all the game had to offer, it would be a popular product, but the game offers league play, as well. Players can draft any one of twenty-eight teams in four different divisions. Teams are ranked in eight different skill categories (e.g. coach, offensive line, quarterback, etc.), so the draft is functional rather than aesthetic.

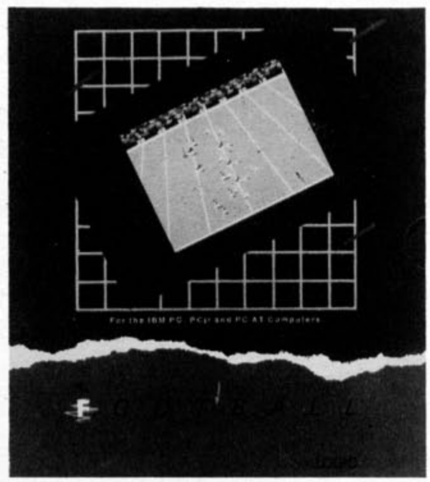
That recaps the plus yardage, the minus yardage can be stated more succinctly. The arcade aspects of the game are difficult. Execution must be perfect (or near-perfect) by the human player. This is fair when two human opponents are playing, but makes for a near-impossible challenge when one plays the computer. Further, the "inside the helmet view" may be a unique perspective, but the two-dimensional computer screen makes it impossible for the player to have one important perspective that the on-field player has, peripheral vision. This increases the difficulty level somewhat. Finally, since the graphics portray the "inside the helmet view" from the offensive perspective, the game offers an entirely different (and less legitimate) feel on defense. Playing defense is extremely disorienting from this perspective. Perhaps, a split-screen perspective would help.

Whatever one's feelings about the game, when the plus yardage and minus yardage is added together, this action/strategy game is a watershed design. It is available for Apple, Atari ST, C-64, and IBM. Circle Reader Service #50.

**4th & Inches** from Accolade is a product with similar appeal, but an entirely different feel. In this new release, Bob Whitehead (designer of Hardball) has provided a "game film"

type screen perspective which allows the player to observe both teams from the sideline/line of scrimmage frame of reference. These graphics are colorful caricatures of football players and the animation is fluid. The arcade action seems faster-paced than GFL Championship Football because of the wider field of view which the screen shows and the arcade play itself is more forgiving than the other game. Like the game discussed above, 4th and Inches requires the player to control each individual ball handler, but where the former is more realistic in terms of execution, the latter is easier to master on the arcade level.

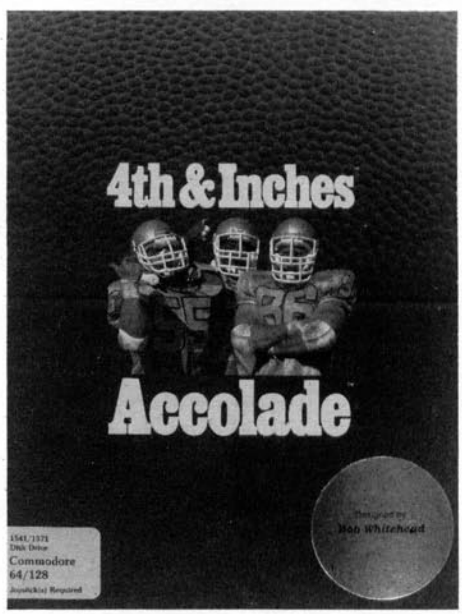


The new release is strategically oriented, as well. The offensive playbook offers eleven formations, ten rushing plays, four kicking plays, and fourteen passing plays. The defensive playbook offers five basic formations and seven defensive plays. As in the game discussed above, however, play selection must be followed-up with careful execution in order to be successful.

The minus yardage involves the lack of league play. The game is not set-up to accommodate different styles of play and continuity of league results. Also, the game loses some of its complexity due to the fact that one is essentially playing the same team every game. In spite of the variety in the playbook, this essentially reduces the over-all effect of the game to a "beer and pretzels" effort. Of course, some readers may consider that to be plus yardage. The other minor problem to be considered is that there is a disorienting screen shift on kicking and passing plays which slows up the flow of play considerably. In spite of these two criticisms, this game is a welcome addition to the genre. It is available for C-64 only. Circle Reader Service #51.

**Gridiron** from Bethesda Softworks is an action/strategy football game which allows for an actual NFL DataDisc® to provide a statistics base of authentic players. Nevertheless, this is a game where




both play selection and mouse/joystick manipulation are vital to success. Plays are, as in the games described above, executed in "real time" with the player using his mouse to control the ball carrier or active defensive player. Unlike the games discussed earlier, however, the football players are represented by colored dots akin to the "X and O" diagrams one sees on a coach's chalkboard rather than animated figures. On offense, the mouse controls the ball carrier until he either pitches, hands off, or passes. Receivers are identified by a stripe across their dot to indicate eligibility. The basic playbook contains twenty basic offensive and twenty basic defensive plays, but the game system allows users to design their own plays and add to the playbook. In fact, players can load up to 28 custom playbooks on a data disk, making an extremely viable league possibility.

This game has tremendous constructability in that it contains provision for a league draft and customizing teams. More than the other games listed in this category, this game is statistics critical. Poor receivers make for poor probability in terms of pass plays, etc. Pure statistics-based players will not like it, however, because a poor arcade player can undermine good statistics in a hurry. Yet, the game is worthy of note because it takes speed and strength into account in determining the results of plays where the previous games do not. Making contact with the ball carrier is not sufficient to make a tackle in Gridiron. The player's strength may cause him to drag the would-be tackler along for several yards. This statistical weight isn't often observed in computer football games.

Although this game is only available for the Amiga and Atari ST, the graphics are not as spectacular as one would expect for these machines. These machines do add one interesting wrinkle, however. The manual suggests hooking up one's videocassette recorder to the video output of the Amiga and connecting this with the video input of the VCR (as well as the audio out channels to the audio in of the VCR). By doing this, one can create one's own potential instant replay of any portion of the game.

Circle Reader Service #52.

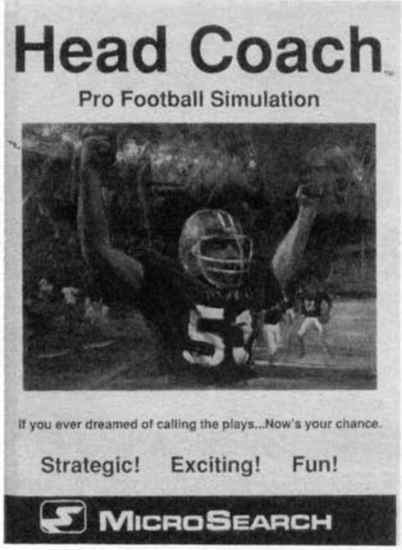
**Football** from subLogic has been around for a while and deserves some mention. Even though the action sequences are easier to control than in the other games listed in this section, the graphics are mediocre and, at times, confusing. The most minus yardage comes from the fact that it is difficult to tell one's team members from those of the opposing team. This problem really complicates the idea of broken field running. Further information can be found in **CGW #30**, pages 20-21, and **CGW #32**, page 12. It is available for the C-64 and IBM. Circle Reader Service #53.

## Strategy Games

**Head Coach** from MicroSearch is an abstract stat-oriented strategy game. It is abstract in the sense that the players and team names are fictional. The NFL requires royalty payments for use of real team and player names used in games. Thus some football games, including Head Coach avoid this expense by using "typical" stats without associating "real" player names to said stats.

Head Coach has a lot of good things going for it. For example, it has the most stimulating sound effects of and football game I'm aware of. Second, even though the fictional teams which come on the disk are not based on either college or NFL teams, there are several distinctive styles and playbooks listed and the constructability of this program would make it possible to customize one's favorite college or pro teams. Third, the standard playbook for each team is relatively thorough in that coaches can direct which running back is supposed to run through which hole without having to customize a play. If the coach wants to improvise on the fly, the program can read a specially designed play. If the coach wishes to customize a playbook, the program can handle that, too. Fourth, players can customize uniform colors to reflect his favorite team's colors. Fifth, each player on the field is identified with a number. One could use this program to practice being a play-by-play announcer if observing a computer vs. computer game.

The flow of play seems realistic and the play outcomes are satisfying. Some Amiga owners will not like the fact that play selections must be entered at the keyboard by one coach at a time, but it is the keyboard input which allows one to customize plays




on the fly. After the offensive and defensive plays have been input, a graphics routine portrays an aerial view of the numbered players going through their paces. At times, the graphics routine can be deceptive, as in the case of a scrambling quarterback who seems totally buried, yet escapes to gain a few yards. However, the results are usually visually sharp and clear cut.

Minus yardage for this program must focus on the keyboard interface which, while opening up creative possibilities on the one hand, slows down the game on the other. Minus yardage must also be applied for the lack of easily accessible files on real NFL teams. Circle Reader Service #54.

**Mac Pro Football** from Avalon Hill is another machine specific product which is worthy of note. *[Ed: The description of this game was provided by William H. Harrington.]* It is a meticulous simulation of modern pro football with a host of features. It offers three coaching skill levels (in descending order, Championship, Playoff, and Contender), and the computer opponent not only remembers your plays, but is even capable of changing the game plan in the second half (unlike some NFL coaches).

MPF teams may be selected from either the historical matchups from Super Bowls I to XX or by mixing and matching teams from eras as different as Lombardi's Packers and Ditka's Bears. There is even a "Set Game Option" to pick up the action at any time in any game. Now, it is possible to find out if the Minnesota Vikings could really have stopped the Dallas Cowboys in the final two minutes of the '75 NFC Playoffs, held onto the lead, and gone on to the Super Bowl! There are even weather and domed stadium options. During game play, continuous offensive rushing and passing statistics are available via screen or printer. At the conclusion of the game, complete team statistics are available. This detailed display should satisfy the most demanding sports buff.

The game has its own special graphic pizzazz in addition to its strategic challenges. The on-screen graphics are superb. The top left half of the screen depicts a football field in profile. Beneath this display is a window that provides a "blimp's eye" view of the field. The offense and defense are depicted in traditional O's and X's with one big difference. They are animated! Once the play begins, you watch as the players execute your play (watch out for that quarterback sack!). To the right of the play action window, another window alternates between displaying an animated referee who calls penalties by means of official hand signals and a list of current team statistics. There is also a scoreboard and a few other surprises. A full range of play options is available from wide open running games featuring Draws, Dives, Traps, Slants, Sweeps, and Quarterback Sneaks to the aerial circus featuring classic Drop Back, Play Action, Roll Out and Shotgun passes.

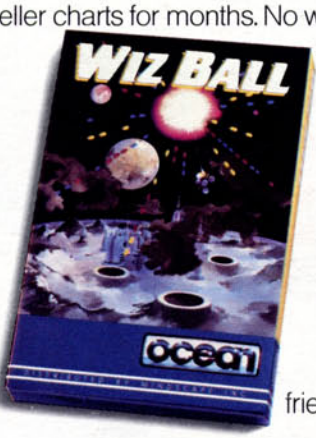
Minus yardage must be tabulated for the only thing missing, sound effects.

*Continued on page 42*

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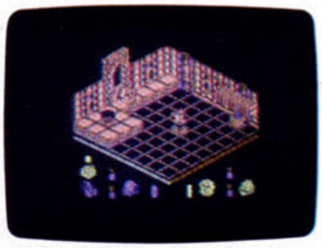





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Circle Reader Service #44

# Computer Gaming World Meets




Lord British was there with a harem girl at his side (at least, during the masquerade ball) and a multitude of working *Ultima V* prototypes in his possession. Steve Jackson was there, brandishing his *G.U.R.P.S. Horseclans* rules and smiling about the success of *Autoduel* and *Ogre*. Gary Gygax, co-creator of Dungeons and Dragons, unleashed his *Cyborg Commando* game system. Robert Asprin and Lynn Abbey had left the "Sanctuary" of their Ann Arbor hideaway for a "myth-tical" quest into fandom. Michael Moorcock was presented with an astonishingly life-like replica of "Stormbringer" during the costume competition. Bill Leslie and Tom Carbone of **Omnitrend**, publishers of *Breach*, were there in this strange new *Universe*, rubbing shoulders with the amazingly un-*Paranoid* designer, Greg Costikyan. Doug Wood offered his gentle presence in this southern *Phantasie*.

How could the CGW staff resist?

Dragon Con '87 was the perfect place to present the **1987 Computer Gaming World Games of the Year Awards**. The date was October 2-4, 1987. The place was Atlanta, Georgia. There, under the shadow of Georgia Tech, we joined with "Trekkies" and "techies" for a splendid weekend of science fiction and science fact. CGW Publisher Russell Sipe chaired a panel on "Developing Plot in Computer Games." Richard Garriott, better known as Lord British and as the designer of the *Ultima* series, served on the panel along with Bill Leslie (designer of the *Universe* series and *Breach*) and Doug Wood (designer of the *Phantasie* series) Sipe began the discussion by stating that there are three basic elements in computer role-playing games (or in any story, for that matter). These are: 1) environment—the world, universe, and/or culture in which the adventure takes place; 2) tension—the challenges, combat, and/or puzzles which must be resolved; and 3) plot—how the story actually develops and what the story-line is. The designers were asked to state the order in which they placed these elements into their games.

Lord British responded first. The cutting-edge computer role playing game (CRPG) designer admitted that he develops the environment first, follows with the tension element, and allows the story-line to evolve close to the end. He reiterated the fact that each new *Ultima* is built upon a new technology and insisted that this is proper because the computer media may determine the appropriateness of plot.

We had been under the impression that Lord British was something of an anomaly in this approach, but Doug Wood concurred with this method. In the *Phantasie* series, Doug suggested that he had a basic idea of plot elements before he began the project. However, the refined plot was the *last* ingredient to go into the product. He insisted that one had to know what one needed to happen and the tools one had to work with (i.e. what one can program) before he develop the plot around these limitations. Bill Leslie, who is hard at work on *Universe III*, told the audience that he was more comfortable when he starts with a story premise, then develops the programming necessary to present the story. He noted, however, that as he constructed the game, it tended to influence the final product. Therefore, the capstone of the plot is the last portion of the product to fit into place.

Lord British summarized the answers by suggesting that the person who develops the plot in detail prior to programming has a logistics problem. Simply put, ". . . you don't know how much code you're going to use for a very small feature in the game." Several members of the audience wanted to know if the extended memory capacity of the 16-bit machines would help break this alleged logistics jam. The panel responded that 16-bit technology isn't going to help because of the memory-intensive graphics. The audience protested that there might be too much use of graphics. One participant called the proliferation of 16-bit "chrome" a "creeping munchkinism." Doug Wood felt that attitude was going too far and noted, that "a game must capture your attention. Graphics and sound accomplish that." The audience continued to speculate about the need for more sophisticated artificial intelligence in adventure games. The discussion was abbreviated by Lord British's admonition that "AI is not limited by the machine, but by the programmer."

Next, Doug Wood expanded on his development process by noting that he does the puzzles before the plot and allows the puzzles to help dictate the plot. "If you've done everything right," the modest designer stated, "it is a straightforward process.

When the panel was asked how much game sequels should be tied to former plot lines. Doug Wood answered, "I like to reward people who played earlier games, particularly those who won." All three panelists agreed that they had made marketing decisions not to depend too much on their previous releases. In both *Ultima* and *Phantasie*, though, it was noted that there were certain characters who carried over into the later products.

Sipe asked each panelist to quantify (using percentages) how important they perceive plot to be in a CRPG. See table for their answers.

**The Importance of Various Game Elements**

| Designer | Environment | Plot | Tension |
|---|---|---|---|
| Lord British | 50-60% | 25-30% | 15-25% |
| Doug Wood | 30% | 30% | 40% |
| Bill Leslie | 40% | 40% | 20% |

*Doug Wood followed up on his answer by stating that he believes that Phantasie*'s strongpoint is plot. Bill Leslie emphasized that his work has moved from trading and incidental combat (the tension emphasis) to more of a character and plot emphasis. This means that character development in the *Universe* series is taking a turn away from attributes and toward decision-making, particularly ethical questions within the gray areas of life.

CGW's chief executive also moderated a panel on "Programming Board and FRP Games." Sipe initiated the discussion with the question, "Why convert **Boardgames** to **Computer Games**?" Panelist Steve Jackson answered the question nonverbally by pulling a wad of currency out of his wallet and waving it in the air. That obvious reality noted, other reasons were examined. Sipe suggested ability to add a computer opponent can play a big role. Lord British mentioned the capacity for adapting maps and handling bookkeeping. John Miles, one of the bright, young talents at **Origin Systems**, insisted that the computer's capability for number crunching made it ideal for extending the possibilities of combat calculations. Steve Jackson, designer of *The Fantasy Trip, Car Wars, Illuminati, and G.U.R.P.S.*, replaced the Alexander Hamiltons in his wallet and suggested that the computer's ability to look-up tables faster than the most proficient game master made this a worthwhile effort. Bill Leslie exhorted his fellow designers on the point that "Computer games should *enhance* the design, not just copy it."



*CGW Asst. Editor Johnny Wilson (2nd from rt.) previews Ultima V at Dragon Con '87*

Having established the ground rules, several of the panelists attempted to clarify the difference between a "literal translation" of a boardgame (a la *Ogre*) and a "free translation" of a game (a la *Autoduel*). Jackson was extremely complimentary of **Origin Systems'** addition of a "real-time editor" to *Autoduel*, for example. Jackson also observed, with regard to *Ogre*, "I believe this is specious, but I continually get the comment that the *Ogre* is cheating. 'You cannot get that many hits on a D6.' What's really happening is that the computer is optimizing its attacks." Lord British concurred with this observation by remarking, "Remember that the computer is taking the mathematically accurate option in movement, attacks, etc."

When pressed on specifics, Lord British referred to the fact that the ogre in *Ogre* randomizes three major offensive stances which set the strategic assumptions for that game. For example, one ogre hates howitzers. Therefore, its prime targets are howitzers. Bill Leslie stated that **Omnitrend** took a different response to artificial intelligence in *Breach* in that the strategies are based on personal decisions, rather than mathematical decisions. Hence, the artificial intelligence bears a simulated personality.

The value of "licenses" was discussed with Sipe noting that **Strategic Simulations, Inc.** had recently picked up the prestigious rights to do computerized *Advanced Dungeons and Dragons*. Lord British observed that the real value of a license is simply name recognition. The main effect on the game comes in the area of combat system and nomenclature. Bill Leslie agreed, noting that "Designers should not shoehorn a design into the computer, but concentrate on what computers do best - draw maps, roll attributes, etc."

In closing, Sipe allowed the designers from **Origin Systems** and Jackson to talk about *Undead*, Steve's RPG which was originally designed to be a computer game. Although it is already published as an RPG, Jackson insists that it has too much bookkeeping to make it a real success as a pen and paper game. As a computer game, though, they think it should be fast-moving game. The seminar was dismissed on this positive note.

While all this profound discussion about computer game design was being promulgated, more than seven hundred gamers were crowding the computer game section of the convention to actually play the games we were talking about. More than 100 people played in the *Ultima V* tournament, while an **Origin Systems'** programmer observed at all times

and took note of potential bugs to improve the final product. Forty different computer game tournaments were originally scheduled, but the computer games committee believe that 6-10 would be sufficient. **Tevex** helped the committee get cooperation from software manufacturers in providing prizes and a local computer dealer, **Computer Works**, provided almost 40 *Laser 128*s for the computer room (the convention only provided a table in the dealer room, space in the program, and a chance to sell computers at the convention). **Computer Software Service** provided the *Atari STs* for the *Breach* tournament. Robert Costner, chairman of the committee and president of one of the sponsoring user groups, states that this group will be hosting **Origins** in 1990 and doing a similar competition at that time. We agree with the representative from GAMA (The Game Manufacturers Association) who was reported to have said, "This is the best computer gaming room I've seen anywhere."

The final day of the convention was the moment we had been waiting for, **The Computer Gaming World Games of the Year Awards**. The program began with a video-tape showing the history of the magazine and a light-hearted view of the office at **Golden Empire Publications** where this glorious publication comes to life. Then, the nominees and awards were presented.

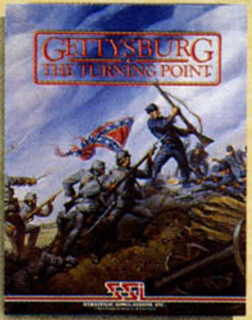
"For Adventure Game of the Year:
**Electronic Arts** for *The Bard's Tale II*—Michael Cranford and Brian Fargo with Interplay Productions, designers;
**Electronic Arts** for *Starflight*—Greg Johnson, Rod McConnell, and T. C. Lee, designers;
**Infocom** for *Leather Goddesses of Phobos*—Steve Meretzsky, designer;
**Infocom** for *Trinity*—Brian Moriarty, designer; and
**New World Computing** for *Might and Magic*—Jon Van Canegham, designer.

And the winner of CGW's **Adventure Game of the Year** is:
Electronic Arts for *Starflight*—Greg Johnson, Rod McConnell, and T. C. Lee, designers." *[Ed: Where most other space games do one thing well (i.e. offer a combat motif, arcade sequence, or flight simulator),* Starflight *gives a holistic experience and a great story-line to boot.]*

Next, CGW's coveted **Action Game of the Year** award was presented.

"For Action Game of the Year:
**Accolade** for *Hardball*—Bob Whitehead, designer
**Electronic Arts** for *Marble Madness*—Atari Games Corporation, designer (Larry Reed, Amiga version);
**Electronic Arts** for *Earl Weaver Baseball*—Eddie Dombrower and Teri Mason, designers (strategy by

*(Continued on page 62)*




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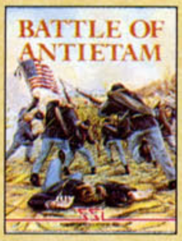
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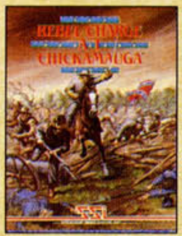
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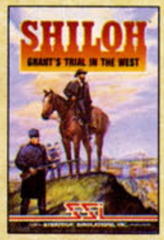

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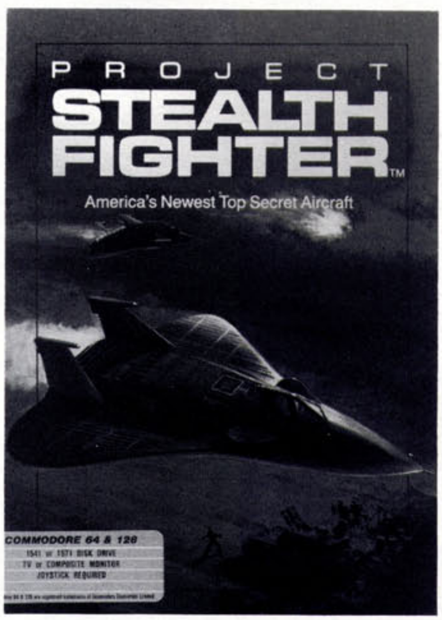



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# PROJECT: STEALTH FIGHTER

*by M. Evan Brooks*




| | |
|---|---|
| TITLE: | Stealth Fighter |
| SYSTEM: | C-64/128 |
| PRICE: | $39.95 |
| DESIGNER: | Jim Synoski and Arnold Hendrick |
| PUBLISHER: | MicroProse Software<br>Hunt Valley, MD |

## For Your Eyes Only (A Brief Dossier)

Subtitled "America's Newest Top Secret Aircraft," *Stealth Fighter* purports to put the user in the cockpit of the F-19 for missions in various world "hot spots". The word "purport" is utilized because no one has published the actual flight specifics of the Stealth-type aircraft. Those in the know are not discussing the matter candidly and in conversations with Pentagon or defense-type individuals, the topic is quickly changed. Thus, while the flight specifics appear reasonable to the layman, there is no way of telling how accurate the simulation is.

Once again, **Microprose** has done its outstanding packaging and documentation effort. The instruction manual is clear, concise and extensive. A careful reading of the documentation will tell the user all he ever wanted to know about the Stealth aircraft and its utilization. Aside from technical data (which most users will glance over quickly), there are detailed characteristics of the various weapons systems (seventeen different ones, plus extra fuel tanks and reconnaissance cameras), guidance on fighter tactics, a careful walkthrough of a sample mission, and regional briefings for the scenarios.

In addition, separate maps are offered for the various scenarios and a keyboard overlay is provided. With over thirty separate controls (e.g. Inertial Navigation System, Strategic/Tactical Map, Target Tracking Mode, Threat Display, Weapons Bays 1-4, Radar Jammer, Infrared Jammer, Decoys, etc.), the overlay is a deeply appreciated user aid and makes the program playable.

Little criticism can be rendered against the documentation and it is hoped that other designers might take a page from Microprose's example. As Microprose has noted, one should attempt to succeed in mission accomplishment and not "fly the algorithms." While it is difficult to determine what differentiates a Medal of Honor mission from a Silver Star mission, this is realistic. An individual can never be sure as to how truly successful the mission was, but overall, mission accomplishment and a safe return qualify as a success, no matter what the tangible reward.

## Systems Analysis

Possibly, the most serious criticism that can be aimed at Stealth Fighter is that the product is a synthesis and not a radical innovation. While Gunship was an innovation in computer game design, Stealth Fighter is an amalgam of design parameters seen previously in F-15 Strike Eagle and Gunship. In discussions with local retailers, this reviewer has been told that Stealth Fighter is not dominating sales as is usual for Microprose releases. The usual customer comment is, " . . . another flight simulator??" It is a shame if this is true on a larger scale, because Stealth Fighter is an interesting release. As a "ground pounder", this reviewer has little in common with those who sleep on clean sheets at night (e.g. the "wing wipers"), but nevertheless, the effort that went into Stealth Fighter is apparent.

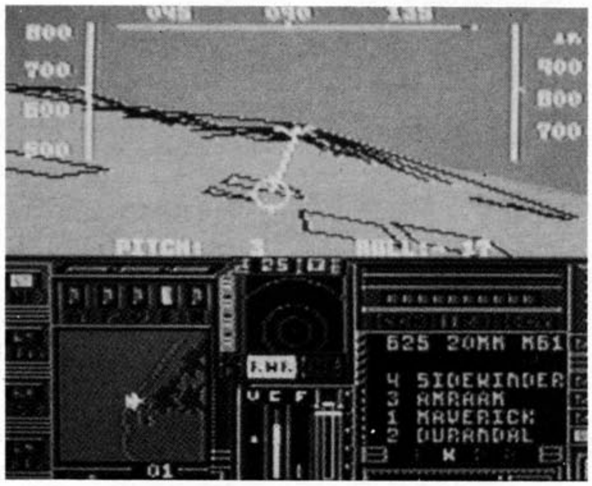
The most radical concept involved in Stealth Fighter is that one's fighter aircraft is not expected to be a hunter-killer of the skies. Instead, the program rewards careful avoidance of the enemy until the primary target is destroyed. Furthermore, with the flight dynamics of the aircraft being sacrificed in order to minimize its electro-magnetic visibility, this is a fighter aircraft whose role in life is to avoid detection, accomplish a mission and exit ASAP. Detailed dogfighting is an invitation to an early demise.

Designer Arnold Hendrick has made a cogent observation when he noted that the F-19 is a "submarine of the skies". Submarine tactics, the careful stalking to secure an unobserved firing position, is the crux of stealth fighter. Unlike submarine warfare, however, once contact is made, the user will find it much more difficult to break off and lose oneself in the "Unfriendly Skies." If one survives, one has the potential for rapid advancement. In fact, beginning as a second lieutenant, one has the potential to make brigadier general and retire after 99 missions. However, given the difficulty of the program, it is the rare user who will be retiring for a desk job as opposed to a final resting place.

Of course, Microprose has utilized an aircraft recognition test in order to access the program other than in a training mode. Various military aircraft are displayed in the manual

and, while the identification is very difficult for the average "grunt," it does become more facile with experience and is a valid learning tool.

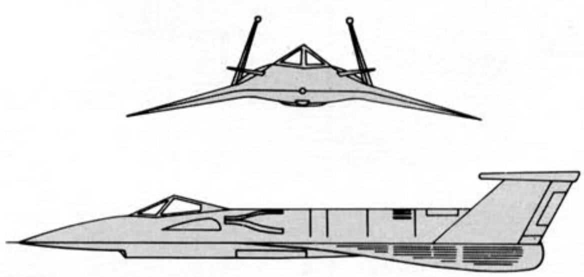
The scenarios offered are: Libya Training, Libya, Persian Gulf, North Cape (of Scandinavia) and Central Europe. One may fly in Cold War, Limited War or Conventional War. A naval officer objected to the Libyan and Persian Gulf scenarios because he maintained that the Stealth technology is simply too valuable to risk in that area of the world. Additionally, the criticism was raised that the costs of Stealth development prohibit its employment in all except conventional wars. While this may be true, the addition of the Middle Eastern Scenarios do offer a timeliness that few products can offer. Once one has read about the latest carrier strike in the Gulf, one may go home and try it oneself, but this time utilizing the Stealth fighter!




Finally, one may choose either ground strike or air missions. The problem facing an air mission is that using one's air radar quickly paints one's plane into a sitting duck. A defense expert has noted that Stealth aircraft will not be employed alone against air targets. While the Stealth may go in by itself, once it has accomplished the mission, it would be extremely rare to escape. Thus, supporting escort aircraft would most likely be vectored in on another approach to serve both as a diversion and as a returning escort.

## Tactical Employment

While designer Arnold Hendrick insists that the F-19 can, within the parameters of the program, defeat opposing fighter aircraft, he notes that the veteran enemy pilots are "really good." This is an understatement. Rarely will one be able to succeed against a veteran opponent.



The wily veterans will never pass in front of one's aircraft, and will utilize an approach and break off *circa* 120 degrees to the rear. Given that fuel is often a vital concern, dogfighting becomes a lesson in misdirected attacks because the fuel consumed therein is actually that edge required to safely return home.

While the Microprose staff feels that proper air combat techniques will yield victory, this reviewer's attempts to scissor, speed brake and otherwise obtain a shot at the veterans was doomed to failure. Then again, this reviewer admits to being a relative neophyte to flight combat maneuvers.

The cannon utilizes a historical gunsight rather than the normal predicting one, i.e. the crosshairs show where the cannon shells would have hit, assuming one fired approximately a second ago. It does take some time getting used to, but it becomes effective against the green and average opponents. However, even such opponents are better subjects of missile attacks than cannon. Simply put, technology has moved beyond the aimed gun and smart missiles can overwhelm even a good pilot.

In terms of ground attacks, one will also learn that "smart" bombs are the rage. The "free fall" bomb requires an expert pilot, a willingness to fly into harm's way for a lethal period, and a bit of luck. As Arnold Hendrick admits, most pilots will prefer the "smart" bombs and only the expert looking for a real challenge will rise to the bait of free fall weaponry with its inaccuracy and limited range (often one-half mile or less!).

## The Return Trip

A criticism rendered against F-15 Strike Eagle was that landings were not offered. That has been more than corrected in Stealth Fighter. Landing options are runway and carrier-based, with difficulty ranging from none (one bounces off the land) to easy to realistic. Even the realistic mode is slightly easier than historical, but it is VERY difficult.

This reviewer has finally managed a ratio of one safe landing in every five missions. There is so much that can go wrong that Murphy's Law seems very apropos. Even the designer admits that when he is away from the game for more than a day or two, he will choose the easy landing mode. Thus, be warned; realistic landings are hazardous to one's health!

This also points out Stealth Fighter's biggest flaw. While one can normally access targets and receive distance readouts, this is not applicable to friendly airfields. Arnold Hendrick notes that this was initially in the program, but space considerations demanded its deletion (it was replaced by the ground bombing routines). Learning to recognize a friendly airfield is definitely not an easy task, but familiarity will make the approach easier.

Rather than directly approaching along the INS route, this reviewer recommends a ninety degree approach to roughly two INS squares from the airfield. At this point, a slow banking turn (c. 26-45 degrees) should bring one into a proper landing pattern. Remember that the field is wider and longer than necessary. One may, therefore, land somewhat off the center pattern.

Strangely enough, this reviewer found the carrier landings

*(Continued on page 30)*

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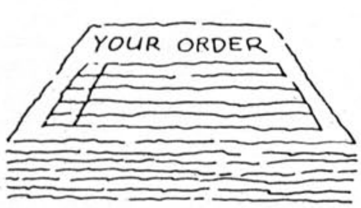
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# PROJECT: STEALTH FIGHTER

(Continued from page 27)

easier than the runway ones. Since the carrier is always the middle of three ships and there are few other terrain characteristics, the approach can be made with greater confidence and, when the landing is finally made, the carrier arresting hooks will quickly bring one's craft to a halt. Given the difficulty of landing, this reviewer strongly urges the acquisition of additional fuel tanks even at the expense of a weapons system.

## Debriefing

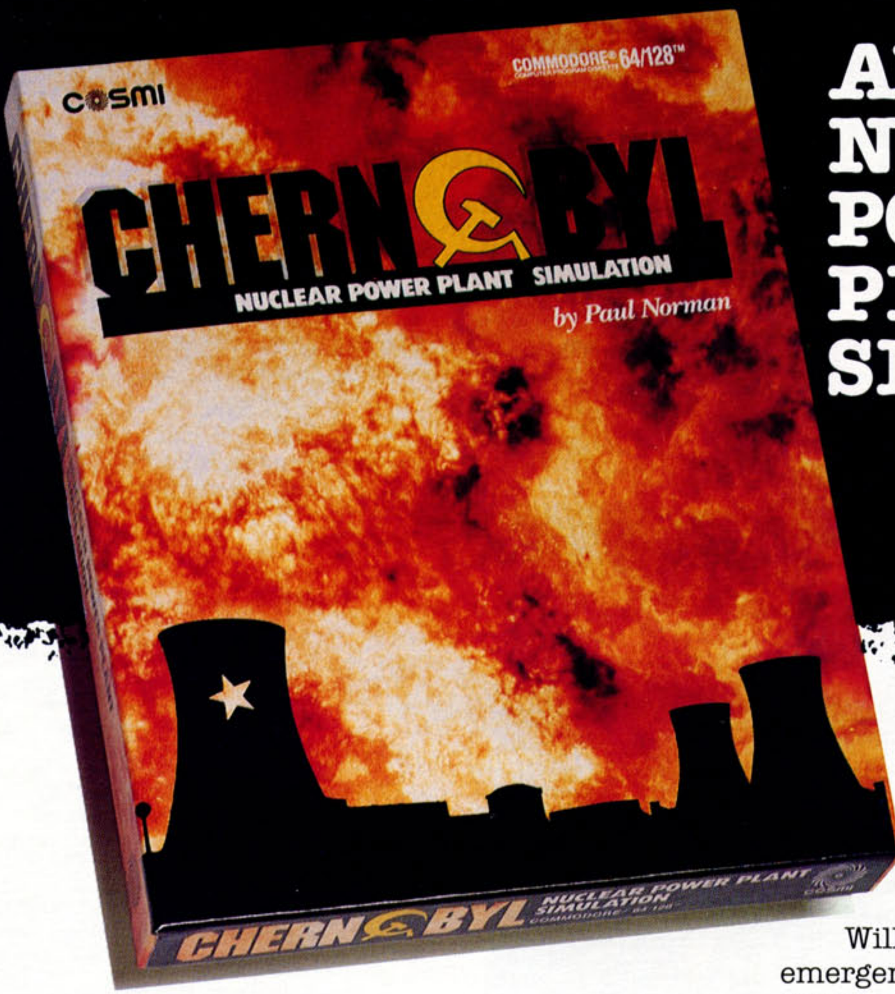
After a mission, one is suitably rewarded by decoration and occasionally promotion. Destruction in the air will reveal the flags lowered to half mast, and one's personal tombstone, suitably garlanded by a wreath. Capture by the enemy gives rise to the Tass headline noting that "Imperialist Spy (Your Name Here) will be punished for aggression against the peace-loving peoples of the regime but that a trade has been arranged for a falsely accused Soviet diplomat." Returning alive, but with minimal success, will leave one drinking alone in the Officer's Club; a successful mission will have one being congratulated by two peers; and an extremely successful mission will show the bar crowded with up to nine fellow pilots, all having a "good time" with suitable comments (e.g. "Hey, who used my scarf for a bar rag?", "Let's practice carrier landings on the bar", "Way to go"). This is a truly entertaining ending, and one destined to please most gamers. Since success is so hard, this reviewer feels that the scene will not quickly exhaust its entertainment potential.

## Conclusions

Stealth Fighter effectively demonstrates that the 8-bit machine capabilities are being stretched to the limit. The friendly airfield identification and the fact that terrain bordering sea areas might be blue or green is attributed by the design staff to memory limitations. The forthcoming 16-bit version will correct these shortcomings, but the majority of gamers will have to suffer from an uncorrectable problem that Microprose acknowledges, but cannot see a solution to.

Timely? It couldn't be more so. Realistic? Yes, it seems so to this writer, but of course I can't document it. Challenging? Definitely!

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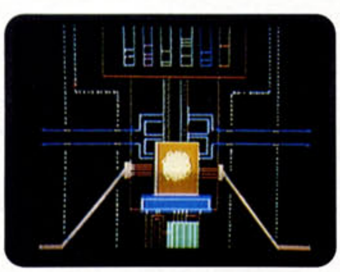



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# Beyond Zork

*by Scorpia*

| | |
|---|---|
| TITLE: | Beyond Zork |
| SYSTEMS: | Many |
| PRICE: | $49.95 |
| DESIGNER: | Brian Moriarity |
| PUBLISHER: | Infocom<br>Cambridge, MA |

Tension vibrates through the air as though it was an almost physical force. The Guildmaster of Enchanters approaches the end of his quest and that ending will also bring about the ending of all magic. It is fore-ordained that magic must make way for science, but there is yet hope. If one stalwart soul can be found, one who can brave unimaginable dangers and obtain the fabled Coconut of Quendor, then all magical knowledge will not be lost. Some part of it can be saved for a future time: a time beyond magic . . . beyond science . . . beyond Zork . . .

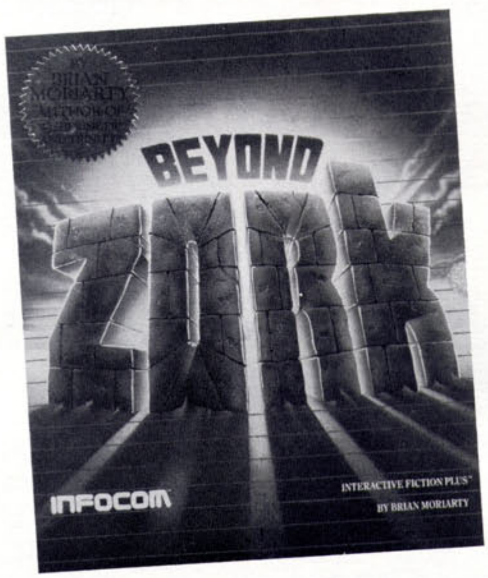
## A Tough Coconut To Crack

As you can probably tell from the above, the events in *Beyond Zork* are concurrent with those in *Spellbreaker*. While the Guildmaster heads for his final showdown that will remove magic from the world, you are engaged in a desperate attempt to find the Coconut of Quendor, within which the remnants of magical lore can be preserved for an as-yet-undreamed-of posterity. It will be a very hard task.

The first order of business is to read the manual, because there are a lot of new features in this game, not the least of which is creating an individual character, much along the lines of a typical computer RPG, such as an *Ultima or a Phantasie*.

Characters come with six attributes: Strength, Endurance, Dexterity, Intelligence, Compassion, and Luck. All are initially set to a value of 1, and you have 60 points to distribute among them, however you like. If you prefer, however, you can choose one of the pre-created characters already on disk or have one randomly generated for you.

These are only starting values, though, because your attributes can go up (or, in some cases, down), depending on your actions during play and the results of using certain magical items. For instance, your endurance increases each time you reach a new level of experience; your




compassion rises if you help certain creatures during the game; and your strength can be increased by magical potions, etc.

How these attributes interact with the game situations is never revealed to you; you can't really tell, for instance, whether the monster missed you because you had good dexterity or good luck. And even that could be changing from moment to moment.

Since Intelligence is the easiest attribute to increase and likely to be the first one to go up, you can start with a fairly low score here. Try not to set it too low, however, or you won't be able to read the magic scrolls, a considerable drawback. You can also start off with a low score in Compassion; this won't be needed until the endgame portion is reached, by which time you will have built it up to something respectable.

Endurance is by far the most important attribute. It governs how much punishment you can take before dying. Some of those monsters out there can hit (or otherwise damage you) pretty hard. Fortunately, you can always back out of an encounter, go to a safe place, and rest until your Endurance is back to normal. This is automatic; you don't need anything special with which to heal yourself, although there are items in the game that can speed up the process.

## They Did The Monster Bash

One thing to keep in mind as you play Beyond Zork is that the monsters are not merely monsters. Many of them are, in a way, miniature puzzles to solve or obstacles to be overcome by methods other than sheer brute force of fighting. True, the monsters are all of the "mindless" variety. They simply fight on, no matter how gravely injured, until defeated. Defeated, by the way, does not mean death. When overcome, they usually crawl off somewhere, never to be seen again, and this can be frustrating.

That is why reading the little booklet that comes with the game, "The Lore and Legends of Quendor", is crucial to success. It isn't just window dressing; it contains a lot of valuable information about monsters and other things you will come across in the game. Keep it with you and consult it often, especially when confronted by a monster (not all monsters are in the booklet, however, and not all creatures in the booklet are monsters).

Often, careful reading will reveal to you a way of eliminating the monster without having to go the hack-and-slash routine.

When running from monsters (a frequent occurrence), keep in mind that each patrols only a certain area, and will go no further. For example, the cruel puppet stays in the forest and won't go after you once you're out of it. Also, you'll soon notice that monsters tend to show up only in the random areas of the world and that each location has its own monster or monsters, which will be found there and nowhere else. There are no wandering monsters, as such, in the game.

Of course, there will be times when only a bonk from a club or a magic blast will do the job. You will have to determine those times for yourself as you become more experienced with the game and its denizens. Overall, if you are not familiar with RPG-style games, your best bet is to create a fairly balanced character, and start with that.

However, Beyond Zork does not really follow the classic patterns of CRPG's, so if you do have experience with them, don't let preconceived ideas lead you astray. Armor is a case in point. I went through much of the game with no armor whatsoever, having found, through experimentation, that in most cases, it didn't help all that much. Certain armor can help in certain places, but in general, you can get by without it.

One of the niftiest features in the game is the ability to define function keys (some might call them macros), to avoid the tedium of typing and retyping repetitive commands, such as ASK OLD WOMAN ABOUT, ATTACK MONSTER WITH CLUB (or axe, or sword), PARRY MONSTER, etc. Ten such function keys are available, and you can set them up any way you like.

## The Random Problem Generator

However, there are some features of the game that will cause people to tear their hair out. Mapping, for one. Yes, there is a nice little partial map on the screen for you to see, in the upper right corner, and that is good. What is not so good is the fact that parts of the landscape are random.

Yep, I said random. These areas always have the same rooms, but they will be connected in different ways. Let's take a simple example, the cellar of the pub. You go down there, map out the rooms (not many), overcome




*The Coconut of Quendor*

the monsters (we hope), and then find you can't get out. So you restore to an earlier position, find something that will help you escape, and go in again.

You soon discover that your previous map of the cellar is useless; the rooms are now rearranged into a different pattern, and will have to be remapped. This can sometimes have unpleasant consequences, such as when running from a monster, only to find yourself in a dead end you weren't expecting. The only way to keep such areas stable is to go through them and then save the game. That will fix the pattern of rooms and connections for a particular location (the cellar, or the jungle, or wherever).

Randomness also extends to the magical items. Aside from scrolls, there is a stick, a wand, a staff, a stave, a cane, and a rod, as well as several potions. The properties of all these change, within certain limits. You never know what you have the first time you pick something up, and if you restore to an earlier position (or start a new game) that item will very likely not have the same property.

I discovered this the hard way in the cellar. Having found a mysterious rod, I pointed it at myself (no other targets being available) and it teleported me out of the cellar. How nice! I thought. Since I wasn't finished down there, I restored the game, did what had to be done, got the rod again, and pointed it at me. Unfortunately, this time it turned out to be a rod of Annihilation. Oops.

Since potions and most scrolls can only be used once and most rods, etc. only twice, the wise thing is to have them identified before you do anything else with them. Fortunately, this is easily accomplished by running to the Magick Shop and asking the old woman in charge about the item. Hence, the wisdom of setting up a function key for ASK OLD WOMAN ABOUT comes into play. There are a lot of things to ask about. Even better, there is no charge for identification!

At the start, therefore, the best thing to do is nip around the area, one step ahead of the monsters where necessary, picking up as much as you can, and then drop into the Magick shop to find out what you've garnered so far. However, don't be in a hurry to use it all.

There is a reason for using magic carefully and sparingly. One of the most frustrating experiences you will have in the game is not only deciding how to solve a particular puzzle (or even if you have what you need), but whether or not the method you have used (there may be several solutions) will prevent you from solving another problem further along in the game. The Staff (or rod, or wand, or whatever) of Annihilation is one example. It is very handy and blasts almost any monster out of your way. You can only use it twice, though. If you invoke its powers early in the game, a later point may find you up against a critter that is just too strong for you or too hard to kill with brute force. Then, you're stuck. So, you must strive to keep a balance among magic, muscle, and trickery at all times

*(Continued on Pg. 57)*

# SECRET AGENTS, MAN!

by David M. Wilson







| | |
|---|---|
| TITLE: | The Spy's Adventures in Europe<br>The Spy's Adventures in North America |
| SYSTEMS: | Apple II |
| PRICE: | $19.95 |
| DESIGNERS: | Mark Pelczarski<br>Jeffrey Jay |
| PUBLISHER: | Polarware<br>Geneva, IL |

As you watch the Dallas Cowboys football game (or cheerleaders), a shadowy figure approaches you. This is the contact you've been waiting for. You reach into your pocket for a jewel so that you can pay off your informant. He hands you a slip of paper with the vital clue you need to find the infamous Dr. Xavier Tortion (yes, Dr. X. Tortion). Quickly, you refer to your dossier and assorted clues. Adding your clue to the others, you have Ap_al_ch__ns. Even without buying a vowel from Vanna, you realize that Dr. X is hiding out in the Appalachian Mountains. It is a simple matter of flying there to apprehend him.

This is the premise behind **Polarware**'s game series, *The Spy's Adventures Around The World*. The different titles include: *Adventures in North America, Adventures in Europe, Adventures in South America, Adventures in the Pacific Islands, Adventures in Africa,* and *Adventures in Asia*. Other titles are planned for the future and enhanced school editions of each of the titles listed above are already available.

Those familiar with Polarware's (Penguin's) previous titles will not be surprised by the graphics created with the in-house *Graphics Magician*. The numerous illustrations of real locations keep the game interesting. In many ways, the game is much like being actively involved in a slide presentation of various points of interest throughout the world. The illustrations are effective, even on a green monochrome monitor.

The game is designed for one to six people either working together or as spy vs. spy. In the spy vs. spy version, each player searches for a different villain, but all players compete for the same jewels, clues, and informants. As play begins, a map is displayed on the monitor. The player selects the region or country to begin searching and that region/country is highlighted on the display map.

Once the player is in the region/country, a list of activities or places to visit (sort of a *What's Happening In . . .* like you'd find in a hotel room) is provided. Participating in the activities or visiting the points of interest may lead the player to a jewel, an informant, or a clue about where to find a jewel. For example, during one visit to California, I visited a major movie studio tour. During the tour, a mechanical shark swam up as if to attack, but tossed a jewel into my lap instead. Players will find that they get higher scores if they participate in all the activities and visit all the places of interest within the region. Any of them could uncover just what one needs to find Dr. X. Another score-raising hint, which applies to *North America* only, is to look for jewels in the Baja California desert and atop one of the rock formations in Monument Valley, Utah.

Players should note that the real skill required in the game is not in finding Dr. X first, but playing for the highest efficiency rating. There are several factors which affect efficiency ratings. The first, and probably most important, of these factors is locating Dr. X on your first guess (players get up to three guesses). Another factor is the number of residual jewels and dollars the player is able to appropriate by the end of the game. The residuals will aid the player's efficiency, as will solving the clue to Dr. X's location with as few letters as possible.

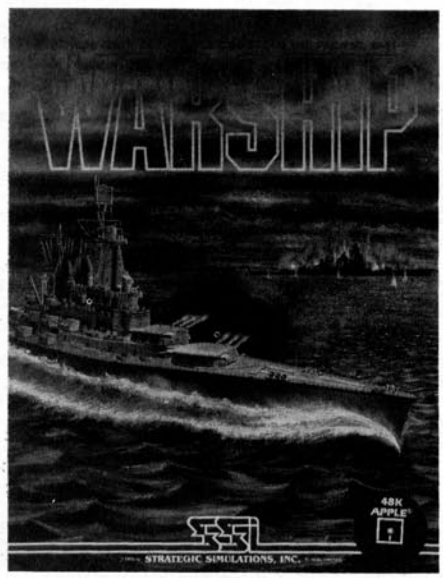
The game's documentation is helpful, though most of it is not "hardcopy." Only a brief description of the rules and a three-color map are provided in "hardcopy." The thorough documentation is included in text files as a dossier on each region/country in the game. The player accesses this information via the "Escape" key at any time during the turn. The dossier provides a wealth of information on the climate, capital, government, and points of interest on each region or country selected.

In summary, The Spy's Adventures series is quite enjoyable, not to mention educational. The game is a must for families with children because of its enjoyable methods of teaching geography, if not because it is simply (and simple) fun. So, if you spy any of The Spy's Adventures, appropriate them with the residual funds in your bank account. It will be money well spent.

*McMaster presented our readers with extremely thorough research in his earlier submission, "Die Kriegsmarine: German Vessels in Warship" (Computer Gaming World #37, p. 38). This article offers further insights.*

# VICTORY AT SEA

## A Common Sense Approach to SSI's WARSHIP




*by Joseph S. McMaster*

The game of *Warship*, just like actual surface naval combat, contains a heavy dose of luck. While there is no way around this fact, there are certain rules that, if followed, will limit the effect of the luck factor and should ensure victory more often than not against your more foolhardy opponents. Be forewarned, however, that I am mot divulging any great secrets. What follows is common sense and not Revealed Truth. My point is simply that you may survive bad luck with caution and cunning, but your foundering will be even more dramatic if you combine carelessness and ill fortune. With those caveats in mind, let's take a look at the ships.

### Destroyers

These ships are among the most valuable and versatile available in the game. While the drooling novice will be tempted to spend all of his "money" on the big, powerful vessels, you should always buy some destroyers with your allotment of Ship Selection Points. The key is to remember that the purpose of destroyers is escort duty. Have them play this role to the hilt.

Destroyers can form a torpedo early warning system for your larger ships. By forming a line of your destroyers approximately four or five thousand yards in front of your battleships and cruisers and keeping them between your large ships and the enemy vessels, any incoming torpedo salvo will be spotted by the destroyers and its course reported to you. This should give you some time to turn your battleships directly toward or away from the course of the torpedoes and thus drastically cut your chances of taking a hit. You will occasionally lose a destroyer employing this tactic, but take solace; a sunk destroyer is almost always worth fewer victory points than a torpedo hit on a battleship. And also remember that while a single torpedo will generally sink a destroyer, it may absorb several more of that salvo's torpedoes while it is sinking.

Perhaps a destroyer's true value, however, is not realized until its ability to make smoke is employed. Against a foe without radar (generally the Japanese), the sight blocking capacity of smoke can be devastating.

Once again, the player should form a line of his destroyers between his main ships and the expected approach of the enemy. With your destroyers' smoke turned on, wait for your opponent to come within range and when your radar locks on, open up with all of your guns. While radar directed fire is less accurate than visual fire, the enemy without radar will not be able to fire at your at all. And getting the first few hits can often mean the critical difference between victory and defeat.

It should be pointed out that this "duck blind" tactic is particularly effective at night. Under the cover of darkness, it may take the hapless player several minutes of unanswered shelling just to seek out and find the destroyers forming the blind. Because of this, the Japanese player, who will almost always be the player with the radar disadvantage, should use his destroyers as scouts rather than as escorts. Send them out well ahead of your big ships until you have discovered the lurking Allies.

By the way, if you are facing a computer-run Japanese opponent, I have found an interesting trick using smoke. By switching your destroyer smoke on and off every two minutes, the computer will constantly retarget from the destroyers to the battleships, when visible, and then back to the destroyers when the battleships disappear again. Because retargeting requires one round of low accuracy

ranging fire; you can blast away with radar fire while the poor computer struggles to achieve a single hit. As this is entirely unfair, I don't use the tactic, but if you are losing all too often to the computer, you may wish to give it a try.

A final use of the destroyer's escort function is in covering advances and retreats. For reasons which will be explained in the next section, there will come many instances when you wish to increase or decrease the range between your main ships and those of the enemy. Such range changes should, whenever possible, be accomplished under a destroyer's covering smoke. There is no sense in risking potentially crippling damage in an advance or fatal damage in retreat. Even if your foe can shoot through your smokescreen with radar, remember that radar directed fire is much less accurate than that which is visually locked on. Don't worry about your destroyers. They are harder to hit than any other type of ship and there are methods that can be employed to decrease the odds even further. These are also described later.

For all I've said so far one might get the idea that destroyers are essentially defensive warships. That is not a bad way to think of them, but there are times when you may use them offensively. This is particularly true for the Japanese player. While destroyer guns can be used against other destroyers or even the occasional cruiser that might stray too close, their real offensive power may be summed up in one word: torpedoes.

For the Allied player, this means keeping an eye open for opportunistic torpedo shots. If you have a surplus, you might even break a destroyer or two out of formation and go looking for an opportunity. Of course, the American playing a 1941-42 scenario should probably not bother with this due to his high "dud" torpedo rate in those years (one reason to, perhaps, "buy British" early on).

The Japanese player, however, must be more aggressive with his destroyers. The destroyer is the one ship type where the Japanese totally outclass the Allies. This is entirely due to the Japanese Type 93 torpedo.

If there is a "gamebreaker" in *Warship*, it is this weapon. Its range is three-quarters of the length and breadth of the gameboard. It packs a warhead more than double the strength of the most powerful Allied torpedo. It gives the Japanese destroyer the ability to, not just badly wound, but to actually sink Allied battleships. That is something the Allied destroyers generally cannot do.

*"Victory At Sea" Will More Often Go To The Commander Who Can Adapt Or Who Dares To Take A Worthwhile Gamble."*

Since the "duck blind" tactic is usually unavailable to the Japanese and since Allied torpedoes represent less of a threat, Japanese destroyers are freer to abandon escort duty. A good strategy would probably entail sending in your destroyers well ahead of your big ships. After locating the main enemy task force, send the destroyers in for their initial torpedo runs. Survivors should return to the Japanese battleships and cruisers and escort them into the desired range. By this time, reloading may have occurred and the ships may be sent in for their final run. Remember to try to make your torpedo shots as perpendicular to the enemy's course as possible. Firing torpedoes at the fast speed setting will increase the chance of a strike.

## Battleships and Cruisers

These are your main offensive weapons. These ship types are combined here because the tactics for both are the same. In the small scenarios, where you may not purchase battleships, your heavy cruisers become *de facto* battleships. In the large scenarios, cruiser fire should be confined, for the most part, to other cruisers and destroyers, but be aware that the eight inch guns on heavy cruisers can penetrate the armor of some battleship classes at close range. Japanese heavy cruisers should be alert to opportunities for firing their torpedoes. Japanese light cruisers should be treated as "super destroyers." They even share the smoke-making ability.

Always begin by analyzing your objectives. While in battleline scenarios, this is simply the destruction of your opponent. In bombardment scenarios, the primary goal is for one side to exit the map. Therefore, planning should begin with ship selection. In bombardment scenarios, where speed is more important, consider buying the faster battlecruisers and *Kongo* and *Repulse* class battleships rather than regular battleships. They are cheaper than other battleships, while their guns yield equal exit points and their extra speed may mean the difference between exiting the board or not.

Keep your objectives in mind. If you are the side which is supposed to exit during a scenario, do not stop to slug it out unless you absolutely must! Often, this becomes a case of abandoning the injured or standing to fight. This decision is difficult and is based on too many variables for me to offer an ideal solution. Be sure that you consider the nature and extent of the damage you incur, especially if main guns are destroyed ;or speed is greatly curtailed. Is there enough time left to exit most of your ships? Is that enough time for the enemy to sink the injured? How much more point earning damage is likely to be received by each side? How much is likely to be repaired?

In battleline scenarios, the problem is mostly one of selecting the proper range at which each of your ships should engage the enemy. At the end of this article, you will find a chart to aid in this determination. The chart lists penetration values (horizontal/vertical) for all of the guns in the game at all ranges. For instance, let us take a hypothetical engagement between

the American battlecruiser, *Alaska*, and the Japanese battleship, *Nagato*.

When the Japanese ship is sighted, the American commander will determine that it is *Nagato* class by the revealed information that it is a battleship of approximately 40,000 tons. Since the Japanese have only one class of that size (40,000/500 = FL 80), the American knows that it is the *Nagato*. Incoming 16"/45 cal. gunfire will confirm this, as it is also the only Japanese ship class armed with that size gun. Speed can also be used to determine ship class.

Employing the chart, then, the American player decides at what range to engage the *Nagato* with the *Alaska*'s 12"/50 cal. guns. There are two such ranges. From 24,000 yards to the maximum range of 33,000 yards, the 12" guns muster a vertical penetration of four or more, enough to get through the *Nagato*'s 4" deck armor. Similarly, from 15,000 yards on into point-blank range, the guns achieve a horizontal penetration of 12 or more, sufficient to pierce the 12" belt armor. Which should be chosen? Unquestionably, the close-in range area should be selected. This is further delineated by examining the chart in reference to the 16"/45 cal. guns of the Japanese ship.

From 24,000 to 33,000 yards, the 16" guns have enough horizontal and vertical penetration to pass through both the *Alaska*'s 9" belt armor and 4" deck armor. However, by the time the range has been cut to 15,000 yards or less, the vertical penetration has dropped to two and can no longer get through the *Alaska*'s deck.

Conversely, taking the Japanese viewpoint, the 16-23,000 yard "window" between the two ranges described above is optimal. Here, the *Nagato*'s own guns can achieve penetration, while the American's shells will bounce "harmlessly" off her sides and decks (although they can still ignite fires).

Therefore, there are times in *Warship* when you will want to open or close the range. If your opponent lies at a relative bearing of 90 degrees, however, don't simply steam toward him on a 90 degree course. Instead, alternate your course every two minutes. To head on a course of 90 degrees, you might alternate courses of 80 and 100 degrees. This makes your ship much harder to hit. Further, if carefully calibrated with your speed, zig-zagging (salvo chasing) will allow you to reach your destination in the same time as a direct course would have. Don't forget your destroyer escorts, either. They can also benefit from weaving.

Take care in your route of approach. Try to stay in the opponent's bow or stern arc. This not only prevents him from bringing all of his main guns to bear, it will also silence most of his secondary armament.

> *"The Hints I Have Given Here Will Often Only Serve To Cut Losses Rather Than Obtain Victory, But Cutting Losses Has Real Value In A Running Series."*

All of these tactics are also useful in retreat. Knowing when to retreat or retire, however, is more difficult. Certainly a ship which has lost most of its main guns or had its electrical system severely damaged is a candidate for withdrawal. Such a ship is only a threat to you because of its likelihood of taking more point-earning damage. Other types of damage, however, make the decision tougher. What should you do if your only battleship takes a very early hit, knocking out its fire control? With its gun accuracy halved for the rest of the game, its value is dubious. If it is your only battleship, however, how else are you going to fight off the enemy's battleships? Again, there are too many variables for an ideal solution. I don't know the answer. Just remember, dilemmas are one of the hallmarks of a great game. Nevertheless, allow me to present a few brief rules for retreating and retiring ships.

First, distinguish between retreating (exiting a ship from the gameboard) and retiring (exiting a ship to a safer area of the gameboard). The difference is that retreated vessels are no longer susceptible to damage (or repair), while retired ships can. Generally, the Allied player should choose to retire more often than the Japanese player because of the Allies' greater facility at repair.

Ships with fire levels above 20 should consider retreating. At that level, you will receive additional damage every two minutes. The longer you wait, the more you risk a catastrophic magazine explosion.

Destroyers with flooding damage should be retired, if possible. This type of damage repairs much more easily on these small ships. On the larger ships, you should probably begin retreating them when their flood damage reaches fifty per cent. The electrical systems will begin to short out at that point, anyway. Since flooding directly affects speed, you will often find yourself rapidly losing the ability to retire or retreat such ships.

Severe electrical damage (over 75%) will probably never be repaired sufficiently to get your guns operating again, particularly if flooding is causing more such damage. Retreat the Ship! Damage from 30-75% calls for retiring.

*Never* retreat or retire a ship because of damage to the bridge. When you take penetrating hits, pray for bridge damage because the resulting impairment to maneuverability is only an annoyance. If your rudder is jammed straight, retire rather than retreat. If it is jammed left or right, you won't have any choice but to go in circles. A jammed rudder gives your opponent a lot of victory points and repairs or detaches fairly easily. If it detaches, he still gets his points, but you regain your ability to steer.

*(Continued on page 41)*

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*(Continued from page 38)*

# WARSHIP PENETRATION TABLE

WARSHIP PENETRATION TABLE (HORIZONTAL/VERTICAL)
RANGE (in thousands)

| | 00 | 01 | 02 | 03 | 04 | 05 | 06 | 07 | 08 | 09 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 18.1/45 | 27/1 | 27/1 | 26/1 | 26/1 | 26/1 | 25/1 | 25/1 | 25/1 | 24/2 | 23/2 | 23/2 | 23/2 | 22/2 | 22/2 | 22/2 | 21/3 | 20/3 | 20/3 | 20/3 | 19/3 | 19/3 | 19/3 | 18/4 | 17/4 |
| 16/50 | 27/1 | 27/1 | 26/1 | 26/1 | 26/1 | 25/1 | 25/1 | 24/2 | 23/2 | 23/2 | 23/2 | 22/2 | 22/2 | 21/3 | 20/3 | 20/3 | 20/3 | 20/3 | 19/3 | 19/3 | 18/4 | 17/4 | 17/4 | 17/4 |
| 16/45 | 25/1 | 25/1 | 24/1 | 24/1 | 24/1 | 23/1 | 23/1 | 22/2 | 21/2 | 21/2 | 21/2 | 21/2 | 20/2 | 19/3 | 19/3 | 18/3 | 18/3 | 18/3 | 17/3 | 17/3 | 16/4 | 16/4 | 15/4 | 15/4 |
| 15/42 | 23/1 | 23/1 | 22/1 | 22/1 | 21/1 | 21/1 | 20/2 | 19/2 | 19/2 | 19/2 | 18/2 | 18/2 | 17/3 | 16/3 | 16/3 | 16/3 | 15/3 | 14/4 | 14/4 | 13/4 | 13/4 | 13/4 | 12/4 | 11/5 |
| 14/50 | 23/1 | 23/1 | 22/1 | 22/1 | 22/1 | 21/1 | 21/1 | 20/2 | 19/2 | 19/2 | 19/2 | 18/2 | 18/2 | 17/3 | 17/3 | 16/3 | 16/3 | 16/3 | 15/3 | 14/4 | 14/4 | 13/4 | 13/4 | 13/4 |
| 14/45 | 23/1 | 23/1 | 22/1 | 22/1 | 22/1 | 21/1 | 21/1 | 20/2 | 19/2 | 19/2 | 19/2 | 19/2 | 18/2 | 18/2 | 17/3 | 16/3 | 16/3 | 16/3 | 16/3 | 15/3 | 14/4 | 14/4 | 13/4 | 13/4 |
| 12/50 | 17/1 | 17/1 | 16/1 | 16/1 | 16/1 | 16/1 | 15/1 | 15/1 | 14/2 | 14/2 | 13/2 | 13/2 | 13/2 | 13/2 | 12/2 | 12/2 | 11/3 | 11/3 | 10/3 | 10/3 | 10/3 | 10/3 | 9/3 | 9/3 |
| 8/55 | 9/1 | 9/1 | 8/1 | 8/1 | 8/1 | 8/1 | 8/1 | 8/1 | 8/1 | 7/1 | 7/1 | 7/1 | 7/1 | 7/1 | 6/2 | 6/2 | 6/2 | 5/2 | 5/2 | 5/2 | 5/2 | 5/2 | 5/2 | 5/2 |
| 8/50 | 9/1 | 9/1 | 8/1 | 8/1 | 8/1 | 8/1 | 8/1 | 8/1 | 8/1 | 7/1 | 7/1 | 7/1 | 7/1 | 7/1 | 7/1 | 6/2 | 6/2 | 5/2 | 5/2 | 5/2 | 5/2 | 5/2 | 5/2 | 5/2 |
| 6/60 | 7/1 | 7/1 | 6/1 | 6/1 | 6/1 | 6/1 | 6/1 | 6/1 | 6/1 | 6/1 | 6/1 | 6/1 | 5/1 | 5/1 | 5/1 | 5/1 | 5/1 | 5/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 |
| 6/53 | 7/1 | 7/1 | 6/1 | 6/1 | 6/1 | 6/1 | 6/1 | 6/1 | 6/1 | 6/1 | 5/1 | 5/1 | 5/1 | 5/1 | 5/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 |
| 6/47 | 7/1 | 7/1 | 6/1 | 6/1 | 6/1 | 6/1 | 6/1 | 6/1 | 6/1 | 6/1 | 5/1 | 5/1 | 5/1 | 5/1 | 5/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 |
| 6/50 | 7/1 | 7/1 | 6/1 | 6/1 | 6/1 | 6/1 | 6/1 | 6/1 | 5/1 | 5/1 | 5/1 | 5/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | | | |
| 6/45 | 7/1 | 7/1 | 6/1 | 6/1 | 6/1 | 6/1 | 6/1 | 6/1 | 5/1 | 5/1 | 5/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | | | | | |
| 5.5/50 | 5/1 | 5/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | | | | |
| 5/51 | 5/1 | 5/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5.25/50 | 5/1 | 5/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | |
| 5/50 | 5/1 | 5/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 2/1 | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 2/1 | | | |
| 5/40 | 5/1 | 5/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 2/1 | | | | | | | |
| 4.7/45 | 5/1 | 5/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 2/1 | | | | | | | |
| 5/38 | 5/1 | 5/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 2/1 | | | | | | |
| 4.5/45 | 5/1 | 5/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 2/1 | | | | | | |
| 5/25 | 5/1 | 5/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 2/1 | | 5/1 | 5/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 |
| 4/50 | 5/1 | 5/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 2/1 | | 5/1 | 5/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 |
| 4.7/50 | 5/1 | 5/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 2/1 | | | | | |
| 3.9/60 | 5/1 | 5/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 4/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 2/1 | | | | | |
| 4/45 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | | | | | | | |
| 3/60 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 |

WARSHIP PENETRATION TABLE (HORIZONTAL/VERTICAL)
RANGE (in thousands)

| | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36 | 37 | 38 | 39 | 40 | 41 | 42 | 43 | 44 | 45 | 46 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 18.1/45 | 17/4 | 17/4 | 16/4 | 16/4 | 16/4 | 15/5 | 14/5 | 14/5 | 14/5 | 13/5 | 13/5 | 13/5 | 12/6 | 11/6 | 11/6 | 11/6 | 10/6 | 10/6 | 10/6 | 9/7 | 8/7 | 8/7 | 8/7 |
| 16/50 | 16/4 | 16/4 | 15/5 | 14/5 | 14/5 | 14/5 | 14/5 | 13/5 | 13/5 | 12/6 | 11/6 | 11/6 | 11/6 | 10/6 | 10/6 | 9/7 | 8/7 | 8/7 | 8/7 | | | | |
| 16/45 | 15/4 | 14/4 | 13/5 | 13/5 | 12/5 | 12/5 | 12/5 | 12/5 | 10/6 | 10/6 | 10/6 | 9/6 | 9/6 | 9/6 | 8/6 | 7/7 | 7/7 | | | | | | |
| 15/42 | 11/5 | 10/5 | 10/5 | 10/5 | 8/6 | 8/6 | 8/6 | 7/6 | 7/6 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 14/50 | 12/4 | 12/4 | 11/5 | 11/5 | 10/5 | 10/5 | 10/5 | 9/5 | 8/6 | 8/6 | 7/6 | 7/6 | 7/6 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 14/45 | 13/4 | 13/4 | 12/4 | 11/5 | 11/5 | 10/5 | 10/5 | 10/5 | 10/5 | 9/5 | 8/6 | 8/6 | 7/6 | 7/6 | 7/6 | | | | | | | | |
| 12/50 | 8/4 | 8/4 | 7/4 | 7/4 | 7/4 | 7/4 | 6/4 | 6/4 | 5/5 | 5/5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8/55 | 5/2 | 4/2 | 4/2 | 4/2 | 3/3 | 3/3 | 3/3 | 3/3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8/50 | 4/2 | 4/2 | 4/2 | 4/2 | 4/2 | 4/2 | 3/3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6/60 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6/53 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6/47 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6/50 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6/45 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5.5/50 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5/51 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5.25/50 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5/50 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5/40 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4.7/45 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5/38 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4.5/45 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5/25 | 4/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 2/1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4/50 | 4/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 3/1 | 2/1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4.7/50 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3.9/60 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4/45 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3/60 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | 2/1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

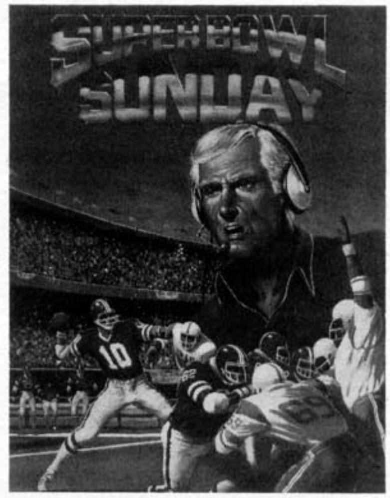
Let me conclude with two important thoughts. First, *Warship* should be played as a series of battles with players keeping a running point tally. At least, have both players take each side of a given scenario. The hints I have given here will often only serve to cut losses rather than obtain victory, but cutting losses has real value in a running series. Second, don't continue to adhere to *any* rule that has outlived its usefulness or become counter-productive. Battles are very fluid affairs. Ultimately, "Victory At Sea" will more often go to the commander who can adapt or who dares to take a worthwhile gamble.

# *THE ELECTRONIC GRIDIRON*

*(Continued from page 18)*

The plus yardage described is due to get better as additional Team Data Disks are released. Circle Reader Service #55.

**Super Bowl Sunday**, also from Avalon Hill, is another statistics-based strategy game. The plus yardage for this product begins with its availability in several formats: Apple, C-64, and IBM. Additional yardage can be added for the "Champions Disk" (sold separately) which features twelve classic match-ups from Super Bowls past. Tack on plus yardage for the ability of a player on offense to select which particular running back will carry the ball and which receiver would be the primary target in a pass play. Many games do not allow this much control in play selection. On defense, players may choose how many and which linebackers to blitz, which offensive player to key on, or which receiver to double-cover. Super Bowl Sunday is a strategist's strategy game which would effortlessly go all the way to paydirt if it were not for the minus yardage.



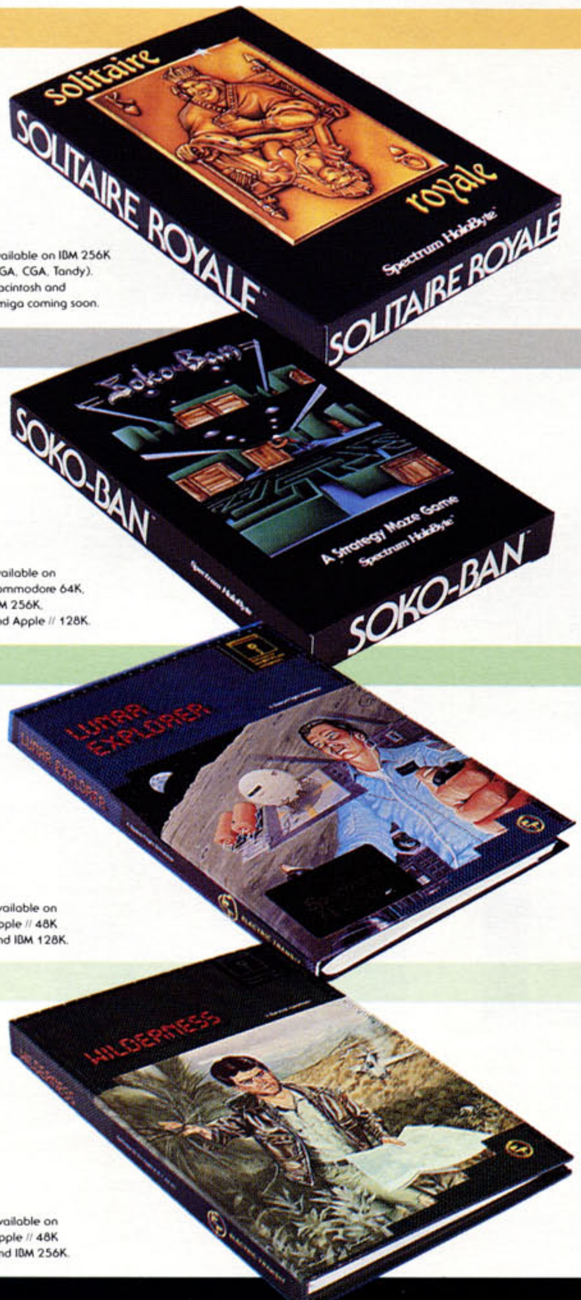

Minus yardage must be assessed due to the unexceptional graphics. Other minus yardage must be assessed for the limited play selections (although these are enhanced by the ability to assign particular players to a task). Nevertheless, the game is worth playing and offers realistic results. Circle Reader Service #56.

**3-in-1 Football** from Lance Haffner Games is a unique product. This is a text-only football strategy that is able to hold its own with products produced on a bigger budget. Plus yardage for this game is gained by recognition that it is available on a multitude of machine formats, team data disks are updated yearly, college *and* professional data files are provided, the game is easy-to-learn and play, and the results are almost always realistic.

*(Continued on page 52)*



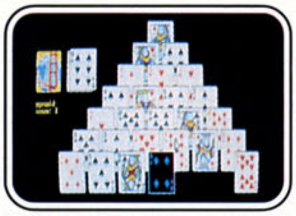
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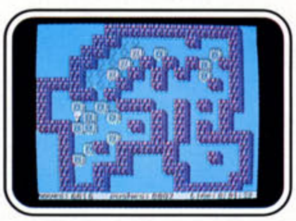


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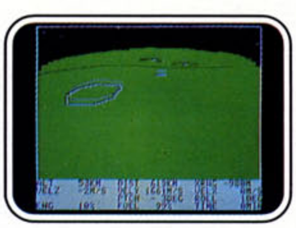


IBM version

Available on Apple // 48K and IBM 128K.

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Apple // version



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Circle Reader Service #63

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*2473 ghosts, 586 scrolls*
*–and one wicked demon*



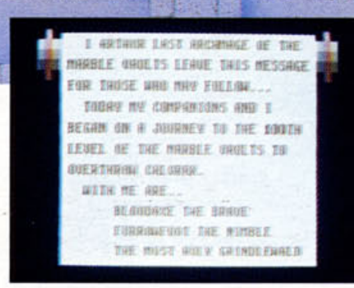

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# BATTLES IN NORMANDY

## *SSG'S New Western Front Game*

*by Bob Proctor*

| | |
|---|---|
| Name: | Battles In Normandy |
| System: | Apple, C-64 |
| # of Players: 1 or 2 | |
| Price: | $40.00 |
| Designers: | Roger Keating<br>Ian Trout |
| Publisher: | Strategic Studies Group Inc.<br>Walnut Creek, CA |

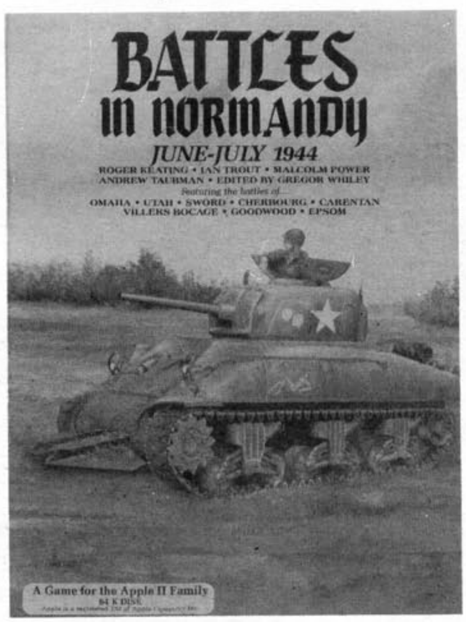
*Battles In Normandy* (BIN) is the latest wargame from Australia's **Strategic Studies Group**. BIN is described on the back of the package as "an exciting sequel to Battlefront". They do use an almost identical game system but ownership of *Battlefront* is not required to play or enjoy the second. Perhaps, "sister-game" is a better description. Scenarios designed for either game can be played using the Master Disk from the other. There may, however, be some differences in play balance due to the changes noted below.

## The Corps of the Matter (Description of game system)

Like Battlefront, BIN uses 6-hour turns (4 per day with one being nighttime) and a scale of 1 kilometer per hex. Both sides issue orders each turn, then combat is resolved and movement takes place. The computer will play either side for solitaire play or can referee a game between two human opponents. As an interesting fourth option, the computer can play itself. This mode is dandy for demonstrating a computer wargame to your Aunts and Uncles and it is also useful in order to study the computer's strategy in a new scenario.

The Battlefront system puts you in the role of Corps Commander. Your Corps has up to 3 Divisions and each Division has up to 4 Regiments. Since each Regiment has 4 battalions and the Division has up to 4 extra battalions (which can be assigned temporarily to any of the Regiments), each Division can have up to 20 battalions. You may, therefore, have as many as 60 battalions under your command. These battalions, plus HQ units, are what show up on the map. Combat battalions come in 14 different flavors, from airborne infantry to tank destroyers.

Unlike most other wargames, however, you do not give orders to the units that you see on the map. You must issue orders to the Divisional and Regimental commanders who in turn give orders to




the battalions. If you say "Attack," they will attack with everything. If you say "fall back in reserve," they will fall back with everything. Sometimes, of course, a battalion will get separated from the rest of its Regiment. It may get snarled in a traffic jam or be routed by enemy attack (forcing it to retreat regardless of orders). This game system rigidly enforces the *role* of Corps Commander and doesn't let you go running off to be a battalion commander whenever a key unit gets in a bind.

This is revolutionary. Conventional board games could never do this because there was no computer to act as a subordinate commander. If that square of cardboard represented a battalion, you got to move it exactly where you wanted it to be during your movement phase. Most computer wargames have adopted the same philosophy to date. I guess it goes back to chess and checkers and is pretty deeply ingrained. Nevertheless, it is easy to coordinate attacks when you are moving all the units. In the Battlefront system, *you* choose an objective (a town, hilltop, bridge, road junction, etc.) or an enemy unit to attack and the *battalions* choose their own route to get there and arrive in their own time. The result is definitely not coordinated! You watch the screen helplessly, swearing at idiotic commanders who lead their battalion through a swamp to get to their objective instead of using a more direct road.

Is this more realistic? Obviously, it is more realistic in a role-playing sense for you to wear one hat instead of many, but the issue is more complex than this. Do your computer-controlled subordinates behave in a realistic manner, for instance? In BIN, you seem to get disadvantageous behavior but not the opposite. No battalion commander, for instance, will attack a nearby enemy if his regiment is "engaged" with another enemy elsewhere. No battalion will ever disengage from a heavily pinned enemy to slip past and take an important town or junction. In other words, you never seem to get the benefits of individual initiative, only the loss of control it engenders. This situation could be corrected by more detailed programming and I have no doubt that this will happen as more games are written for computers with 256K and more instead of only 64K.

In order to find out whether you will

*like* the Battlefront/BIN system, however, you need to think about how *you* feel about this concept of a single viewpoint. Imagine a game about night-time combat such as in the movie "Platoon." In a role-playing sense, creating a realistic point of view would mean the player would not know anything but what one person could see or hear. They'd have little idea of what was going on in an overall sense and the object may be simply to survive. A student of military history, however, wants to see the overall picture clearly and know why different attacks and defenses are the most effective. For this, they must know more than any single participant could know and the game system must convey the important factors in a clear, concise fashion.

It is hard to imagine a game that would satisfy both of these points of view. Clearly, they could not happen at the same time. In BIN, you have lots of control when designing a scenario but lots of "fog" once you begin to play. Or maybe you could play with limited intelligence first and then have an "instant" replay that would fill in the whole picture. Anyway, as the level of the game goes from small (squad level, tactical, turns in minutes) to medium like BIN (battalion level, operational, turns in hours), the commander has access to more information. It becomes easier to imagine a single person whose viewpoint satisfies our "student of military history" but besides knowing everything the student wants to be able to control every unit to test his theories of how things SHOULD be done. As the level of the game goes up and the size of the forces (and staff) under the commander increases, the less realistic this perfect control becomes.

So, how about BIN? As stated above, it adheres tightly to the point of view of a Corps commander. It gives you data on weather, terrain, unit strength and condition but fails to provide any idea of combat odds or why a particular combat result occurred. You get a feel for this only after many games. Long experience is, of course, how real Generals learn. (Here's a Philosophical Volleyball for you game designers: is it realistic to put someone without this experience in charge of a Corps?)

When it comes to control of individual units, BIN is too restrictive. You can NEVER issue orders for a battalion even though some of them are always going to end up in the "wrong" place. The only thing you can do is pull the entire regiment back into reserve and then send it forward again hoping they do better. This is due to the limited set of commands available on the menus. You are locked in the command trailer and can never play Patton -- out directing traffic at the critical point. You don't even get the satisfaction of sacking a subordinate for a particularly stupid maneuver!

Your orders to a regiment are limited to just four options. What those options are depends on whether the regiment is engaged with the enemy, in contact with them, or not in contact (called "ready"). If they are engaged, there are four levels of attack giving seven possible orders instead of four.

Under this approach, you cannot assign a regiment to advance toward an enemy unit or objective unless it is completely out of contact (no battalion is within 2 "hexes" of an enemy). There is no way to break contact or disengage except to give the Reserve order, which will cause all battalions to retreat toward the divisional HQ. This works as long as your HQ's are 6-8 hexes behind the front lines and admirably displays the use and value of "maneuvering room." It doesn't work well at all when you are crowded into a tiny beachhead and your HQ's are on the lines or still on the ships. For this reason, the Battlefront system does not seem to be well suited to portray an amphibious invasion and Normandy is a curious choice. Fortunately, only a few of the scenarios suffer.

## Beach Battle Bingo (The Scenarios)

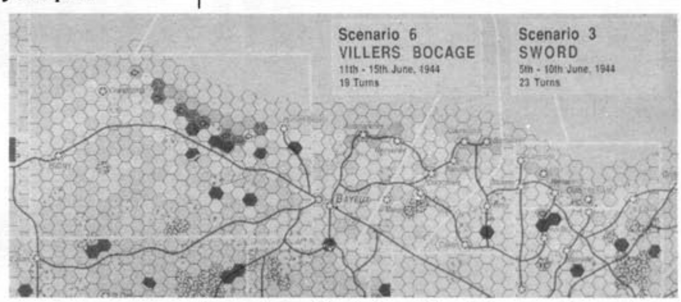
There are eight basic scenarios in BIN; I say "basic" because each one also has from two to four historical variants given. These are changes to the "at start" conditions which can be made quickly with the Design routines. Here are the eight:

1. Omaha19 turns, 14x26 map

Historically, of course, this was a contested landing and thus, this is the most congested of all the scenarios. The only valid strategy is to attack everywhere.

2. Utah55 turns, 14x39 map

Utah beach, the most westward, was not contested and a fair-sized beachhead can be grabbed *if* the US moves quickly and uses the 101st Airborne well.




3. Sword23 turns, 14x13 map

Though this was another congested beachhead, the British also have paratroops that can, with skill and luck, grab a little extra space.

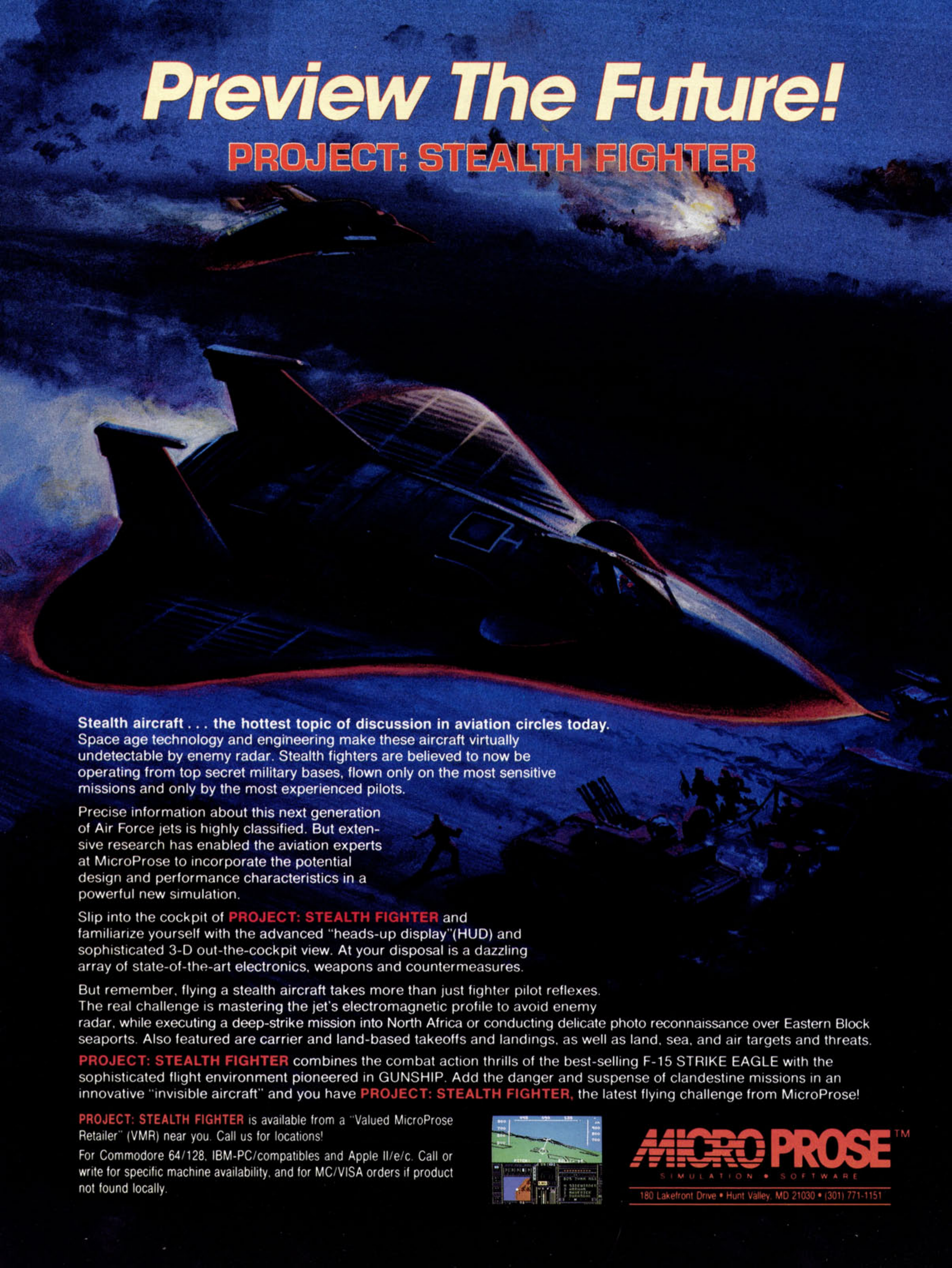
4. Cherbourg43 turns, 28x39 map

Thanks to the large map and the fact that the Allies start in a fairly cohesive line with lots of room to maneuver, this scenario uses the BIN system to its best advantage. An adroit commander can do quite a bit here. Taking enough of fortified Cherbourg will still be tough and can be made impossible by poor weather which not only slows the advance but keeps the Allied air support grounded.

5. Carentan43 turns, 14x13 map

This is a long scenario, but relatively small forces help it play quickly. Taking Carentan is usually pretty easy for the Allies, but they must also hold it against a late German counter-attack.

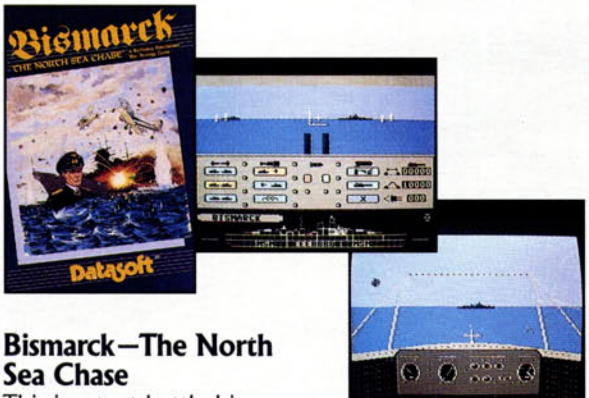
*Continued on pg. 54*



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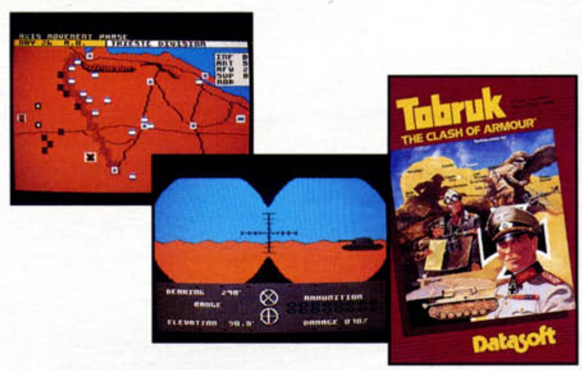

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# FIRE POWER




*by Roy Wagner*

| | |
|---|---|
| Name: | Fire Power |
| Systems: | Amiga |
| Coming: | C64, Ap2gs, IBM |
| # of Players: | 1-2 |
| Price: | $24.95 |
| Designer: | Reichart von Wolfsheild |
| Publisher: | Microillusions |
| Distributor: | Activision |

*Fire Power* is the first in a One-to-One series of low cost arcade style games from **Microillusions**. This is a tank-to-tank shoot-'em up within two enemy fortresses. Future releases in this series will be *Turbo*, an auto racing game with many selectable options, and *Galactic Invasion*, a shoot em up in space with lots of excitement and challenges for your joystick skills.

Fire Power is well designed to provide an individual challenge against the computer or two player action using a split screen with two joysticks or over a modem on two separate computers. Movement is joystick-moderated and guns are fixed in the forward direction. The goal of the game is to capture the enemy flag and return it to one's home base.

The game comes with no printed documentation, so the player(s) start by selecting the play option or reading the game instructions and hints. Then, the player(s) choose from three tank designs with various values for speed of movement, damage points, fuel capacity, number of mines carried, and number of men that can rescued (Note: For modem play, only one tank design is used).

The fire power of each tank is unlimited and continuous with the joystick button held down. Points are scored for destroying the enemy's tank and any enemy buildings, gun emplacements, fuel depots, and helicopters. In addition, points are scored for rolling your tank over enemy units fleeing a destroyed building. This realistic action is complete with the sound of a gruesome splat and a splotch of blood. [Ed.: I could live without this feature.] It clears from the display (but not one's mind) in a few seconds.

The sounds used for this game are excellent and range from rumbling tanks and rocket-firing helicopters to explosions of everything destroyed.

Rubble replaces structure and glowing embers remain after the explosive destruction of cannon fire. The area of each fortress is very extensive, but is the same every game.

Advantage can also be gained by rescuing any of your own men. This is done by maneuvering your tank near them, stopping, and then letting them get on board. Take care, though, because you can also run over your own men. When playing against the computer, you start with only five tanks and an additional tank is added for every fifteen men rescued. In the two player version, tanks are unlimited, but you can get an additional mine for every five men rescued. These men must be taken to the Red Cross station at your base to receive these credits.

Fuel can be obtained by returning to your base starting location or by destroying enemy fuel depots. If you run out of fuel, your tank is destroyed. Each time one of your tanks is destroyed, you start over at your home base.

Helicopter support for both sides is controlled by the computer. They will seek out any tank that is inactive. Approaching helicopters can be observed on a small radar screen of the nearby region. It shows the location of tanks, any helicopters, and base flag which happen to be within radar range of your tank. Helicopters can be shot down easily by either tank.

It is also possible to lay mines by pressing the joystick fire button and pulling back on the joystick. These are proximity mines and show no mercy for any tank that comes near them. In the heat of a mobile battle, it is easy to accidentally move backward, plant a mine, and destroy oneself.

The final goal is simply the capture of the enemy flag. The total point count is purely for comparison between the two players. There is no vanity-board for top scores. At the end of a game, a final report is posted that shows the total casualties, total men rescued, and the total damage inflicted. A count is given for tanks, men, and helicopters.

The modem option requires the use of two **Hayes** compatible 1200/2400 baud modems. A null modem cable will *not* work for use between two computers in the same room. The modem connection is initiated by entering ATDT and a telephone number in a text box and mouse clicking on the *Call* box. Then the other modem will answer the call and a message to that affect will appear on each screen. One of the players must click on the *Start* box and the game begins. The split screen only displays your movement on one side. The other side can be used for typing messages to the other player. A third box can be used to *Hang Up* the connection. The game only comes with one disk so each modem player must buy their own copy of the game.

The action, graphics and sound put this game directly up there with any arcade game - not the home computer variety, but those that take lots of quarters to play. The game system is somewhat challenging, but does not offer much variety or require much strategic thinking. I find Fire Power to be a fair priced design with exceptional presentation. In other words, it is a great shoot 'em up arcade wargame.

« Circle Reader Service #67

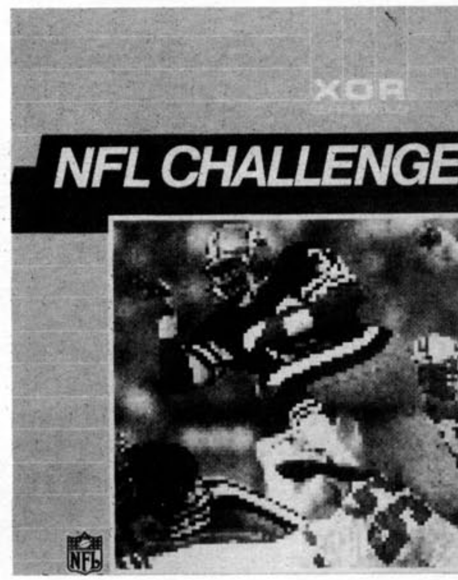
# THE ELECTRONIC GRIDIRON

*(Continued from page 20)*

Those who desire proof of the last assertion need only review the statistical comparison printed in **CGW #5.5**, p. 42. As for the game itself, it has improved with age. A recent replay utilized the new ability to choose the starting quarterback or replace the quarterback during the game. The computer vs. computer simulation genuinely reflected last year's grim reality as Marc Wilson of the L. A. Raiders threw seven (count 'em, seven) interceptions in one game. Another new feature added to the latest version is the ability to set the goal posts on the goal line during a pre-1974 simulation.

Minus yardage must be noted for those who want graphics and further losses must be assessed for the limited play selection. The offensive playbook in this game is limited to 14 plays and the defensive playbook contains only 6 alignments. It is available for Amiga, Apple, Atari 8-bit and ST, C-64, IBM and Macintosh. Circle Reader Service #57.

**Instant Replay** from Software Innovations is not exactly a game, but it is worthy of note for those who like to replay full seasons of NFL games using the computer vs. computer mode. The game comes with the full 1986 statistics base for all 28 professional teams and offers an attractive full-field graphic to display field position. Each play is described as though a play-by-play announcer was calling the game and statistics are available at any time during the game. It is available for the IBM with, at least, 320K of memory only. Circle Reader Service #58.




**Computer Quarterback** is a statistics-based game from Strategic Simulations, Inc.. Priced as an SSI Classic ($14.95), this product

is a real sleeper. Dan Bunten designed this game to feature both a semi-pro and professional playbook. The interface requires paddle entry and play selection takes place in a real-time mode. There is even a sequence to go through in calling an audible. Team Data Disks for individual seasons have been marketed through the company catalog and this is a very playable game. Why is it on the bargain list? It has the minus yardage of not having a graphic depiction of plays in a graphic age. One sees the offensive and defensive formations, but only the ball is animated on the field. It is available for Apple, Atari, and C-64. Circle Reader Service #59.

**NFL Challenge** from XOR Corporation is still, to this date, the cream of the crop. It uses authentic NFL statistics which are updated annually and offers the most sophisticated playbook of any of the strategy games described (with the exception of Head Coach). Plus yardage must include the 49 different offensive options and 26 different defensive approaches. The use of chalkboard style "X and O" diagrams to portray the results of plays is still effective and the capacity for instant replay is a nice effect. The statistics-handling ability for this simulation is still excellent and the addition of three levels of computer coaching (Conservative, Aggressive, or Balanced) makes the Human vs. Computer option that much more enjoyable. In addition to the quotation from **CGW #5.5** lavishly quoted in advertisements for the product ("If there was such a thing as the 'CGW Seal of Approval,' NFL Challenge would get it."), plus yardage must be appended for the new "roster editor disk" which enables owners to keep team rosters current in spite of trades, retirements, cuts, injuries, and line-up changes (an absolute must as long as the Rams are in the league).

Another big gainer for XOR is the *Game Situation Development System*. This disk enables the player to utilize NFL Challenge to second-guess real game situations, establish "what-if" situations, or try out new strategies in the same situation.

Mark down minus yardage for the fact that the latest version of the game still does not offer individual statistics. Further minus yardage should be noted for the failure to include names along with the numbers and statistics for each NFL team. Some readers will sack the quarterback upon learning of the $99.95 price tag for the game. Others will give plus yardage for the newly marketed economy model of the game, **Pro Challenge.** Pro Challenge uses the same system, but is less expensive because it pits two all-star teams together rather than the full NFL database. The games are available for IBM and Macintosh. Circle Reader Service #60.

## Battles In Normandy

(Continued from pg. 48)

6. Villers-Bocage19 turns, 14x13 map
7. Goodwood19 turns, 21x13 map
8. Epsom31 turns, 14x13 map

These last three all portray attempts by Montgomery to break through the enclosing German ring near Caen. It is very difficult to drive through a gap in the enemy lines in BIN. As soon as a single battalion makes contact with the enemy, the whole regiment is drawn to it and ceases to advance. A single enemy unit in good defensive terrain can tie up 3 regiments easily. As a result, the designers actually omit the main thrust in these scenarios. About half way through, a large force will appear in the German rear along with some new Axis units.

## Evolutionary Tide Pools (Differences Between Battlefront and BIN)

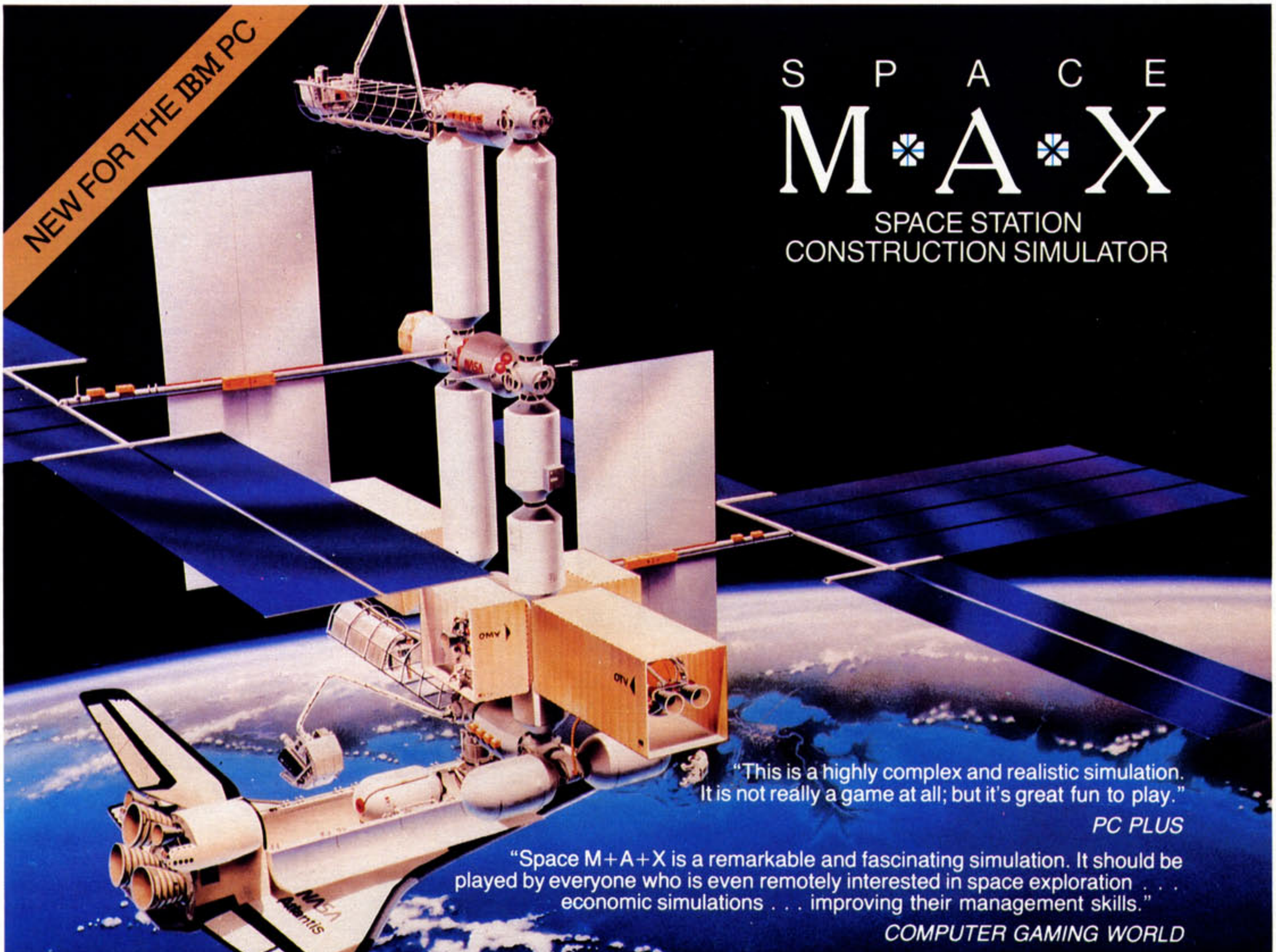
For the record, the following changes were made to the Battlefront system to accommodate the special conditions of Normandy. *Line of Supply*: Units which have their Line of Supply cut still have a chance of receiving supplies. This makes this inevitable situation not quite so disastrous. *Initial Turn*: Games do not have to begin on the morning turn. For example, both Utah and Sword begin on turn 4 so that the action can start with a night-time parachute drop.

*Artillery and OffBoard Support*: In Battlefront, these are normally used at half value. In BIN, they are only used at FULL strength for assault and exploit attacks. *HQ Units*: HQ's have their own movement allowance. *Combined Arms Defense*: A special DEFENSIVE combat bonus is given when infantry, tanks and anti-tank weapons are all available to the defense.

In addition, a new factor for *Climate* has been introduced. This factor determines the overall weather pattern. It is useful only to those who are creating their own scenarios since all Battlefront and BIN scenarios default to European climate.

## Offshore Shelling (Conclusion)

The changes to the Battlefront system seem reasonable, even welcome. I personally think Normandy was a poor choice as a "sequel" and only three of the scenarios (2,4 and 5) feel "right" to me. The good scenarios, however, provide new levels of realism for anyone who wants to see what kind of decisions a Corps Commander must make.




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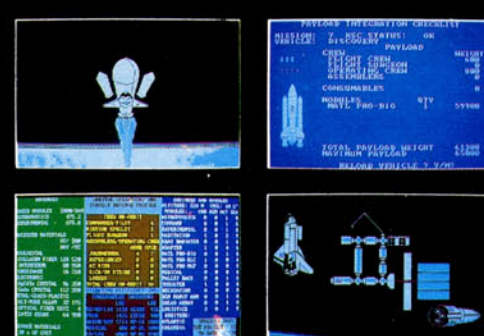
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England (☎ 0451-60770)

# Beyond Zork

(Continued From Pg. 33)

es. Don't be surprised if you find yourself doing a lot of restoring.

## Trade Deficits and Display Windows

The shops (besides Magick, there is one for Armor and one for Weapons) have items for sale, and these can be bought with zorkmids or traded for with various valuable objects that you find on your travels. Note, however, that you will only get half-price for anything you trade. For instance, if you buy the axe, it costs 40 zorkmids. If you later sell it back, you will get only 20 zorkmids for it, but it would cost 40 if you wanted to buy it again. Plan your trades and purchases with care.

The new screen layout, once you get used to it, is quite nice. On the Apple //e, there are two inverse "windows", one long one across the top of the screen displaying your attributes, armor class, and current location, and a larger second one below the first that displays the room description. In the upper right hand corner is the partial map of the area, showing your present location and which ways you can go. The map updates with every move.

On the 16 bit machines, the layout is even fancier, and you can use the mouse to move from place to place by clicking on the map. However, if you prefer, you can turn off the special screen displays and have everything in all-text, just like any other Infocom. Nevertheless, I recommend using the special display (wish this was in other games, too).

Overall, Beyond Zork is a curious hybrid. It is mostly tough Infocom adventure with a patina of role-playing elements. While the elements are important to completing the quest, I never had the feeling that I was, in fact, playing an RPG-type game, in spite of the monsters I bashed, blasted, tricked, or otherwise maneuvered out of my way. They were, like everything else, simply obstacles to be overcome, one way or another; it was just that some methods were atypical for a standard Infocom.

What this means is, if you're worried about the RPG aspects in the game, you needn't be; for all the bells and whistles, it's still an Infocom adventure, although with a somewhat different flavor and point of view.

**Bottom line**: This new approach is tough and frustrating, but this makes it a good one for experienced players.

## New Zork, New Zork

(Warning: This urbane section of the review gives both general and specific hints. Enter at your own risk!)

Since the game is so random in nature and many of the puzzles have more than one solution (for example, there are at least five ways of getting off Zeno's Bridge), giving specific hints for many of the situations wouldn't be of much help.

As noted before, you should try to collect as many magical items as possible at the start of the game. In most cases, they will be lying right out in the open for you to pick up, so it's pretty easy to amass a fair number of goodies. Of course, with monsters on your tail while you're doing this, expect to take a bit of damage now and then, so take the item and keep on moving.

The best thing of all to find is the Scroll of Recall. This, so far as I was able to determine, can be used over and over again without losing its power. It is extremely handy for getting you out of dead ends and other unpleasant places. Of course, you never know where it will turn up, so you may not come across it for a long time.

You will also need a weapon, so visit the wharf for a freebie. While the game calls it a shillelagh, you can refer to it by the much easier "club." It works just as well either way. Later, when you've accumulated a few treasure items, you can purchase a battleaxe or a sword.

Once you've collected some goodies, you can begin working on the game in earnest. You might want to save first, and experiment with the various magical objects (after they've been identified, of course), to get an idea of what they actually do, and what their limits are. Some items, for instance, work only on living things, while other items can affect almost anything, living or not. Better to know



*A Portion of the Map Showing the Southland of Quendor*

that now, than to get an unpleasant surprise in the heat of battle.

Two areas that should be investigated early on are the pub cellar and the lighthouse. Until you've completed those, much of the game will be closed off to you. Make sure you go over the lighthouse thoroughly in your explorations. There is more here than may, at first, be apparent. Keep the booklet handy.

The jungle (or rather, the jewel in the idol in the jungle) is a more-or-less stand-alone puzzle. This one can be done at almost any time, provided you first get rid of the crocodile and bloodworm and have the necessary object or two. The sapphire is the single most valuable treasure in the game and will allow you to buy an equally-valuable item you will need later on.

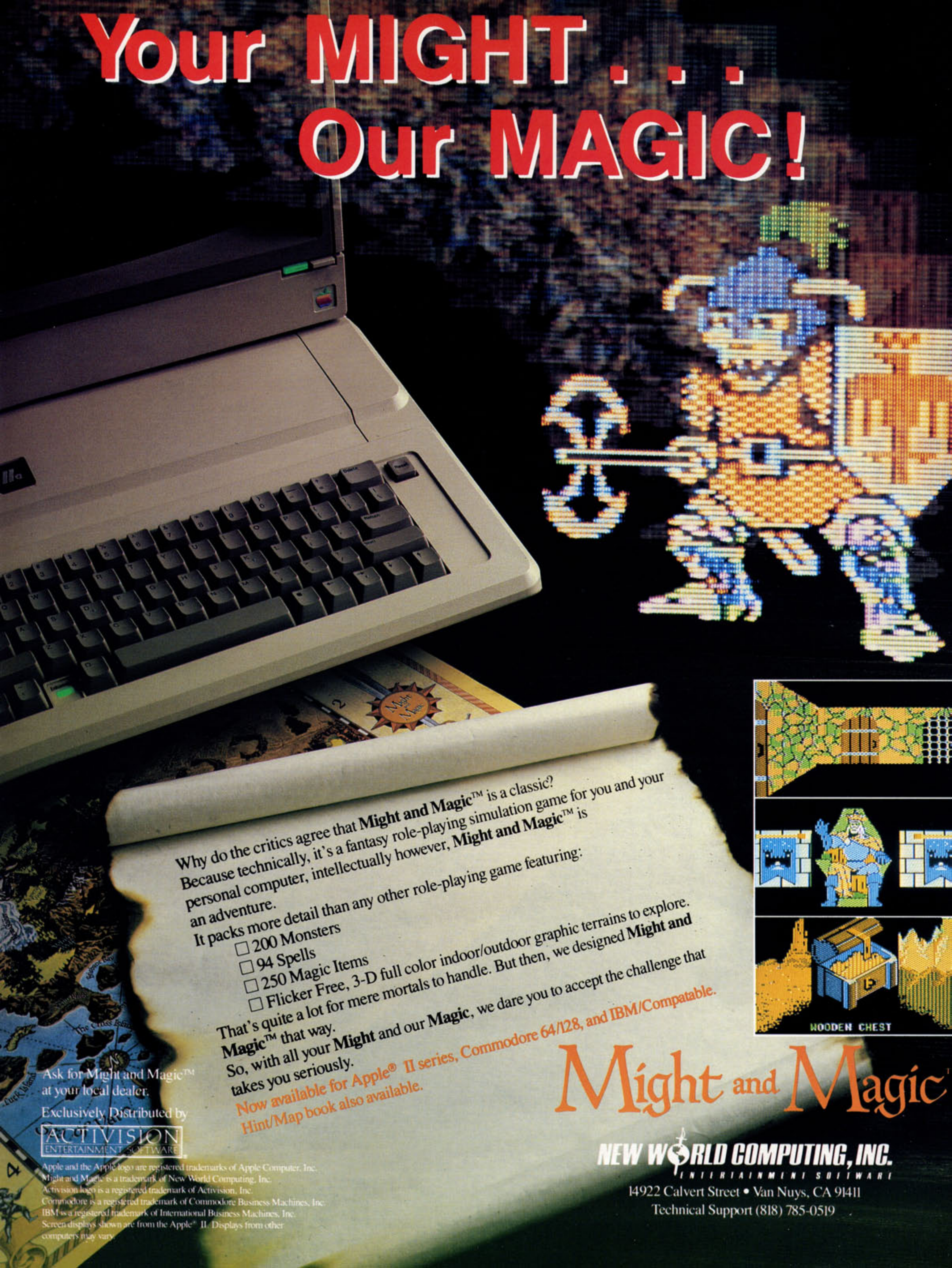
You may have some trouble (perhaps a lot of trouble) with the monkey grinder in Accardi-By-The-Sea. He is far too nimble for you to ever land a blow on him and he is also pretty quick at dodging or reflecting magical attacks. That doesn't seem to leave much, but there is a way. Read the booklet.

When wandering through the dismal Fields of Frotzen, keep a careful eye on the giant corbies. Fortunately, they don't attack, but they will prevent you from reaching a particular spot, unless you know how to keep them away. Observe the scarecrows with care, and remember you only get one chance to visit the land of Froon.

Up in the mountains, you will find a small village menaced by the annual migrations of the dreaded Christmas Tree Monsters. Swishing their tinsel, blinking their lights, singing "Dwaarnyn The Dark-Nosed Ur-Grue", they are kept at bay by a single glyph inscribed in snow. They are also blocking the westward path, and you'll have to find a way past them. A caterpillar would certainly help, although you won't find any in the immediate vicinity. You'll have to do a little work to get one, too. Meditate on the nature of caterpillars.

Of all the puzzles in Beyond Zork, the single most difficult one is the arch in the Ruins and it is probably best left for later. Activating the arch is no problem. A simple examination of it will show you what you need. After that, it gets nasty, and solving the problem of the helmet will require some very intense thought in your part. All I'll say is that when you get stuck, consider something (perhaps more than one) that hasn't seemed to have been of any particular use yet in the game.

There are lesser puzzles in the game, including penetrating the lair of the Ur-Grue, although after everything else, this one is really fairly easy (with the right thing, of course), but the solution is a pretty one, simple though it may be.



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Screen displays shown are from the Apple® II. Displays from other computers may vary.

# Taking A Peek

*Continued from page 6*

at a time can explore the six level Energy Production Plant on Karis. Nevertheless, players control one of the seven crew members of a Special Forces team in trying to rescue earth's survivors from their alien captors. The graphics and flow of play are reflective of GAUNTLET. C-64 ($19.95). Circle Reader Service #10.

TOMAHAWK: Watch out for attack helicopters in the sky! Datasoft has just released this simulation of an AH-64A Apache attack chopper. This user-friendly game has four different difficulty levels and three combat missions to entertain you. Atari, C-64 ($29.95). Circle Reader Service #11.

Epyx
600 Galveston Dr.
P. O. Box 8020
Redwood City, CA 94063

STREET SPORTS BASKETBALL: For those who know that basketball is a game for back alleys, driveways, and playgrounds, this could be the best arcade basketball game around. Grease spots, curbs, and other hazards add spice to this game which is modeled after informal neighborhood roundball match-ups. Apple, C-64, IBM ($39.95). Circle Reader Service #12.

Firebird
71 North Franklin Turnpike
Waldwick, NJ 07463

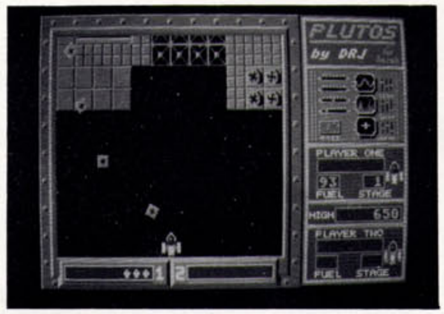
HEARTLAND: Like a scene from "The Neverending Story," Harry finds an old book in the attic and enters the five lands (i.e. levels) which make up HEARTLAND. This arcade/exploration adventure, moderated by a choice of joystick/keyboard controls, offers a unique and largely non-violent perspective. C-64 ($24.95). Circle Reader Service #13.

JEWELS OF DARKNESS: This title is really three illustrated text adventures in one. The pictures are simple, but do break up the text and make it easy on the eyes. These adventures are parser-driven fantasy quests built off three text adventures published earlier in Britain (Colossal, Quest, and Dungeon). Atari, C-64 ($24.95), Amiga, Atari ST, IBM ($29.95). Circle Reader Service #14.

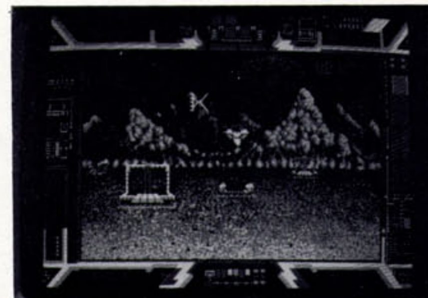
SILICON DREAMS: Kim Kimberley, Secret Agent, is the protagonist of the first two space adventures in this parser-driven space trilogy (Snowball, Return to Eden, The Worm in Paradise). Like the fantasy trilogy mentioned above, these text adventures were published earlier and now find form in illustrated text adventures. Apple, Atari, C-64 ($24.95), Amiga, Atari ST, IBM ($29.95). Circle Reader Service #15.

Microdaft
19 Harbor Drive
Lake Hopatcong, NJ 07849

SOLAR STAR: Energy is the name of the game in this arcade game where the player becomes pilot of the "Solar Star" recovery vehicle and strives to collect vital energy crystals from a computer which has




Plutos



Terrorpods

run amok. One must pay attention to one's instruments, memorize the solar grids, and learn not to be too trigger-happy in order to be successful at this game. Atari ($24.95). Circle Reader Service #16.

Mindscape, Inc.
3444 Dundee Road
Northbrook, IL 60062

PLUTOS: With graphics as detailed as any in the arcades and sound which fully takes advantage of the Amiga's capabilities, this space "shoot 'em up" gives no quarter. If you've always dreamed of fighting one grand and glorious battle with impossible odds, this may be your chance. Amiga ($29.95). Circle Reader Service #17.

Psygnosis, Ltd.
First Floor, Port of Liverpool Bldg.
Liverpool L3 1BY, U.K.

TERRORPODS: A sci-fi action/adventure that allows players to take on the role of an undercover Federation Agent and attempt to discover the secret of the evil Empire's Terrorpod machines, this sixteen-bit arcade game offers a three-dimensional background perspective and exceptionally detailed graphics. Those who prefer strategy to "shoot-'em-up" space opera will appreciate the strategic elements necessary to be successful in one's cover as a commodities broker in space. Amiga and Atari ($24.95). Circle #18.

Sierra On-Line, Inc.
Coarsegold, CA 93614

3D HELICOPTER SIMULATOR: Although the simulated skies may be full of helicopters, this simulation of McDonnell-Douglas' "Apache" helicopter is different. With a 1200 baud modem and a similarly equipped friend, you can dogfight on-line. If you don't have a modem, you can still dogfight above scenery reflective of the Los Angeles, Paris, or New York skylines. IBM ($49.95). Circle Reader Service #19.

THEXDER: Sixteen levels of fast-paced, high-resolution action make up this Japanese arcade import. The game's name is derived from the name of the Thexder Super Assault Vehicle that the player manipulates through the maze in order to disable the, guess what, central computer which has run amok. The twenty different types of alien cyborgs generated by the computer seem reminiscent of Shamus, an earlier arcade hit. IBM PC and PS/2 with numerous graphic options available ($34.95). Circle Reader Service #20.

Softboards
20 Surville Place
Mairangi Bay
Auckland 10 New Zealand

CONNECT: From "Down Under" comes the computer version of the popular family game "Connect Four." The computer opponent is not to be underestimated in this well-executed translation of the table game. IBM ($20.00). Circle Reader Service # 21.

Strategic Studies Group
1747 Orleans Ct.
Walnut Creek, CA 94598

HALLS OF MONTEZUMA: This new release is a tour de force of some of the most famous battles of the United States Marine Corps. Using the ever-evolving and ever-improving Battlefront system, players can deploy crack Marine troops into battles from Mexico City of 1847 to Hue of 1968. Will your subordinates "salute smartly and charge up the hill?" Apple, C-64 ($39.95). Circle #22.

## CONVERSIONS RECEIVED

**For the Amiga:**

Dark Castle (Three-Sixty)
Roadwar Europa (SSI)

**For the Apple:**

Alternate Reality: The Dungeon (Datasoft)
Legacy of the Ancients (EA)
Scrabble (Leisure Genius)

**For the Atari 8-bit:**

Guderian (Avalon Hill)
Guild of Thieves (Firebird)
Shiloh (SSI)

**For the Atari ST:**

The Bard's Tale (EA)
Marble Madness (EA)
Roadwar Europa (SSI)
The Sentry (Firebird)
Wizard's Crown (SSI)

**For the C-64:**

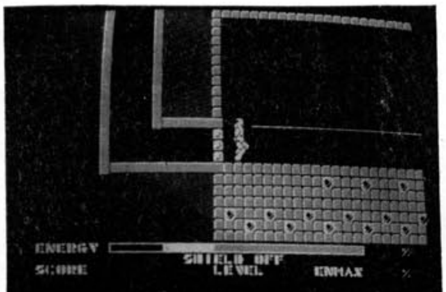
Chuck Yeager's Adv. Flight Trainer (EA)
Deja Vu (Mindscape)
Guderian (Avalon Hill)
High Seas (Garde)
Instant Music (EA)

**For the IBM:**

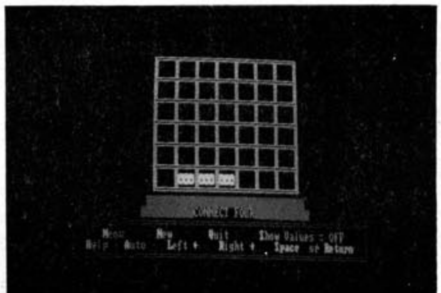
Ace of Aces (Accolade)
Adventure Construction Set (EA)
Dark Castle (Three-Sixty)
Lords of Conquest (EA)
Mech Brigade (SSI)
Patton vs. Rommel (EA)
Phantasie (SSI)
Rings of Zilfin (SSI)
Shiloh (SSI)

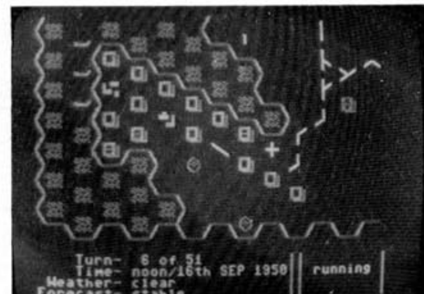
**For the Macintosh:**

Computer Ambush (SSI)



Thexder


Connect



Halls of Motezuma

# CGW Meets Dragon Con '87

(Continued from page 24)

Earl Weaver);
**Master Designer Cinemaware** for *Sinbad and the Throne of the Falcon*—Bill Williams, designer; and **Microprose** for *Gunship*—Arnold Hendrick and Any Hollis, designers. And the winner of CGW's **Action Game of the Year** is:
Microprose for *Gunship*—Arnold Hendrick and Andy Hollis, designers." *[Ed: Thus far, Microprose has held the high ground in military simulators. Though these products are not "flight simulators" or strategy games per se, they offer a unique hybrid perspective with intense excitement and emotional thrill that is rarely experienced elsewhere. Gunship is the hottest of the lot."]*
At this point in time, CGW presented



Lord British demonstrates Ultima V at Dragon Con '87

a **Special Award for Artistic Achievement in a Computer Game**. "The winner is:
**Master Designer Cinemaware** for *Defender of the Crown*—Kellyn Beeck, designer, James Sachs, art director, and Jim Cuomo, musical score. *[Ed: The graphics, animation, and sound qualities of Defender of the Crown are so remarkable that many computer dealers felt that this program was selling Amigas rather than vice-versa. The detailed landscapes and beautiful animation make this a product which appeals to everyone from pre-teens onward.]*
The next presentation was CGW's **Strategy Game of the Year**. "For Strategy Game of the Year:
**Avalon Hill** for *Under Fire!* and Expanded Capabilities Disk—Ralph Bosson, designer;
**Mindscape** for *Balance of Power*—Chris Crawford, designer;
**Strategic Simulations, Inc.** for *BattleCruiser*—Gary Grigsby, designer;
**Strategic Simulations, Inc.** for *Gettysburg*—Chuck Kroegel and David Landrey, designers; and
**Strategic Studies Group** for *Battlefront*—Roger Keating and Ian Trout, designers. And the winner of CGW's **Strategy Game of the Year** is:
Strategic Simulations, Inc. for *Gettysburg*—Chuck Kroegel and David Landrey, designers." *[Ed: Gettysburg is a very superior game, as well as simulation, of one of the most critical confrontations between the North and South. Set-up options allow for historical set-up or a computer-determined randomness for each division's arrival so that the gamer gets an endless number of different Battles of Gettysburg with none of them shackled to history's timetable.]*
Prior to presenting the 1987 **Computer Gaming World Game of the Year Award**, a belated presentation was made. "The winner of the 1986 **Computer Gaming World Game of the Year Award** is **Origin Systems** for *Ultima IV*—Lord British, designer." *[Ed: As Scorpia once noted, "Ultima IV stands alone as an oasis in a desert." Ultima IV is a groundbreaking CRPG game which emphasizes character development without sacrificing plot and action. Of course, some may scoff that we were so late in presenting this award, but remember—they were a year late in releasing it!]*
Finally, the moment for the 1987 CGW **Game of the Year Award** arrived. For the first time in the history of Golden Empire Publications we were so impressed with a design in development that we asked to be included in the beta-test phase of the product. When we first saw this product demonstrated at the 1987 Winter Consumer Electronics Show we realized then that this program was going to come as close to being the perfect simulation of its subject matter that we had ever seen. With our involvement in the beta-test phase it came even closer to the ideal. Therefore we are proud to present the 1987 Computer Game of the Year award to: Electronic Arts for *Earl Weaver Baseball*—Eddie Dombrower and Teri Mason, designers (strategy by Earl Weaver)." *[Ed: EWB is undoubtedly the most exciting sports simulation to be released in years. It has it all and could easily have been considered for either the strategy or action categories in its own right. With the capacity to design your own stadium, choose team colors (Amiga version), trade players, and use instant replays, you can't lose.]*
With such worthy winners, it's no wonder that California shivered on the day we left for the convention. Shore up your houses before next year!

# Reader Input Device

## RID #42 (Use card opposite pg. 8)

On this page, a number of games and articles are listed for evaluation, as well as some general interest questions. When evaluating a game, consider such matters as PRESENTATION (graphics, sound, packaging and documentation); GAME DESIGN (design, playability, and level of interest); and LIFE (does the game wear well?). For each game which you have played or each article which you have read, place a 1 (terrible) through 9 (outstanding) next to the appropriate number.

## Games

1. Gettysburg (SSI)
2. Gunship (MicPr)
3. B-24 (SSI)
4. Wargame Const. Set (SSI)
5. Defender of the Crown (MstDsg)
6. Chessmaster 2000 (STWorks)
7. Russia (SSG)
8. Battlefront (SSG)
9. Ancient Art of War (Brodr)
10. Decision in the Desert (MicPr)
11. Bard's Tale II (EA)
12. Ultima IV (Orign)
13. Earl Weaver Baseball (EA)
14. Bard's Tale (EA)
15. Starflight (EA)
16. Might and Magic (New World)
17. Phantasie III (SSI)
18. Wizard's Crown (SSI)
19. Hardball (Accld)
20. Phantasie (SSI)
21. 50 Mission Crush (SSI)
22. Realms of Darkness (SSI)
23. Deep Space (SirTch)
24. Alt. Reality: Dungeon (Datasoft)
25. Guild of Thieves (Firebird)
26. Nord and Bert (Infocom)
27. Empire (Interstel)
28. Plundered Hearts (Infocom)
29. Stealth Fighter (Microprose)
30. Superstar Ice Hockey (Mdscpe)
31. Conflict in Vietnam (Microprose)
32. The Lurking Horror (Infocom)
33. Rommel At Gazala (SimCan)
34. E.O.S. (EA)
35. WC Leader Board (Access)
36. Wizardry IV (Sir-Tech)
37. Street Sports Baseball (Epyx)
38. Breach (Omnitrend)
39. High Seas (Garde)
40. Road to Moscow (GDW)

## Articles

41. Plundered Hearts Hints
42. Football Survey
43. DragonCon/Awards Article
44. Stealth Review
45. Beyond Zork Review
46. Warship Strategy
47. Spy's Adventures Review
48. Battles in Normandy Review
49. FirePower Review

## Questions

50. What is your age?
51. How much do spend (on average) each month on computer entertainment software?
52. What computer(s) do you use for game playing? (Put answer in comments section).

# Game Ratings

SSI mounted a successful "Rebel Charge at Chickamauga" in order to take the top four positions on the strategy side of our readers' Top 50. SSG's "Russia" is managing to maintain its position in the center of the Top 10 rated games and "Chessmaster 2000" seems to be losing some of its earlier strength. Part of the reason for such dramatic movement on the strategy side is due to the reclassification of "Gunship," CGW's "Action Game of the Year, 1987. As a game which requires both action skills and tactical decision-making, this game would be in the Top 10 on either side. So we moved "Gunship" to the Action/Adventure side to be consistent with the award category.

"Strike yer Union Jack, ye landlubbin' 'Ulti-mates!' Aargh, we've got ya' in our sights!" At least, that's what some of readers are saying as Microprose's "Pirates" begins its assault on the Action/Adventure list with ranging shots within one-tenth of a point from the venerable "Ultima IV." "Starflight" was nudged slightly out of its number three orbital position and some of "Might and Magic"'s magic was dissipated as these titles slipped to positions four and five respectively.

## Strategy Top 50

| Name | Mfg | Machine | Tms Rtd | Avg Rsp | Rating |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Gettysburg | SSI | Many | 6 | 46 | 7.88 |
| Kampfgruppe | SSI | Many | 11 | 93 | 7.66 |
| Rebel Charge | SSI | Ap,C,I | 1 | 22 | 7.64 |
| Wargame Const. Set | SSI | At,C | 1 | 20 | 7.60 |
| Russia | SSG | Ap,C | 2 | 25 | 7.47 |
| M.U.L.E. | EA | C,At | 18 | 77 | 7.44 |
| Chessmaster 2000 | SftTlwk | Many | 7 | 38 | 7.36 |
| Mech Brigade | SSI | C,Ap | 10 | 58 | 7.31 |
| Defender Crown | MstDsg | Many | 4 | 29 | 7.30 |
| Battle of Antietam | SSI | Many | 8 | 43 | 7.27 |
| Fighter Command | SSI | Ap,C | 8 | 43 | 7.24 |
| Guadalcanal Campaign | SSI | Ap | 9 | 48 | 7.24 |
| War in Russia | SSI | Ap,At | 10 | 61 | 7.23 |
| Decision in Desert | MicPr | C,At | 7 | 38 | 7.22 |
| Seven Cities Gold | EA | All | 7 | 118 | 7.20 |
| Crusade in Europe | MicPr | C,Ap,At | 5 | 75 | 7.19 |
| Battlefront | SSG | Ap,C | 5 | 34 | 7.19 |
| Battlecruiser | SSI | Ap,At,C | 2 | 26 | 7.19 |
| War in So. Pac. | SSI | Ap,C | 2 | 20 | 7.18 |
| Carriers at War | SSG | C,Ap | 4 | 81 | 7.17 |
| Europe Ablaze | SSG | C,Ap | 6 | 36 | 7.17 |
| Ancient Art of War | Brodr | I,M | 7 | 33 | 7.13 |
| Reach for Stars | SSG | C,Ap | 4 | 50 | 7.12 |
| Battlegroup | SSI | C,Ap | 3 | 37 | 7.11 |
| Combat Leader | SSI | C,At | 5 | 56 | 7.11 |
| Computer Baseball | SSI | All | 6 | 36 | 7.10 |
| Micro Lg Baseball | MicLg | All | 6 | 36 | 7.09 |
| Heart of Africa | EA | C | 3 | 27 | 7.09 |
| Star Fleet I | Intstel | Many | 5 | 38 | 7.08 |
| Colonial Conquest | SSI | C,At | 3 | 60 | 7.07 |
| Balance of Power | Mndscp | M,I | 4 | 28 | 7.07 |
| Oper Mkt Garden | SSI | C,Ap,At | 4 | 58 | 7.06 |
| Under Fire | AH | Ap | 6 | 23 | 7.06 |
| Silent Service | MicPr | C,At | 6 | 108 | 7.06 |
| NAM | SSI | Ap,At,C | 2 | 23 | 7.06 |
| 3-in-1 Football | Hafner | C,Ap,I | 2 | 20 | 7.05 |
| Carrier Force | SSI | C,Ap,At | 5 | 108 | 7.04 |
| Flight Sim II | SubLg | C,Ap,At | 6 | 84 | 7.03 |
| Conflict in Viet | SSI | C,AT | 4 | 20 | 6.96 |
| Warship | SSI | Ap,At,C | 1 | 37 | 7.16 |
| Lords of Conquest | EA | Ap | 3 | 42 | 6.93 |
| Field of Fire | SSI | C,At | 5 | 67 | 6.92 |
| U.S.A.A.F. | SSI | C,Ap,At | 2 | 26 | 6.92 |
| Ace of Aces | Accld | Many | 1 | 28 | 6.86 |
| Cosmic Balance | SSI | C,Ap,At | 5 | 84 | 6.83 |
| Bomb Alley | SSI | Ap | 4 | 32 | 6.82 |
| Roadwar 2000 | SSI | Many | 3 | 34 | 6.80 |
| Computer Ambush | SSI | C,Ap,At | 6 | 49 | 6.78 |
| Gato | SpHb | Ap,I,M | 3 | 79 | 6.77 |
| Gulf Strike | AH | Ap,At | 4 | 33 | 6.75 |

## Adventure/Action Top 50

| Name | Mfg | Machine | Tms Rtd | Avg Rsp | Rating |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ultima IV | Orign | C,Ap,At | 8 | 93 | 7.87 |
| Pirates | MicPr | C | 1 | 24 | 7.79 |
| Wizardry I | SirTc | Ap,I | 20 | 72 | 7.69 |
| Starflight | EA | I | 7 | 31 | 7.69 |
| Might and Magic | NewWrd | Ap | 4 | 28 | 7.67 |
| Bard's Tale II | EA | Ap,C | 4 | 47 | 7.60 |
| Bard's Tale | EA | C,Ap | 8 | 76 | 7.59 |
| Gunship | MicPr | C, I | 4 | 42 | 7.58 |
| Ultima III | Orign | All | 14 | 105 | 7.55 |
| Wizard's Crown | SSI | C,Ap | 7 | 54 | 7.21 |
| Legacy of Llygamyn | SirTc | Ap,I | 7 | 58 | 7.18 |
| Knight of Diamonds | SirTc | Ap,I | 11 | 55 | 7.17 |
| Phantasie | SSI | Many | 9 | 70 | 7.15 |
| Borrowed Time | Actvsn | | 1 | 27 | 7.15 |
| Archon I | EA | All | 10 | 98 | 7.14 |
| Choplifter | Brdrbnd | Ap | 4 | 79 | 7.13 |
| One on One | EA | All | 7 | 74 | 7.13 |
| Questron | SSI | C,Ap,At | 5 | 97 | 7.13 |
| Elite | Fireb | C,Ap | 5 | 45 | 7.10 |
| Zork Series | Infcm | All | 7 | 122 | 7.09 |
| Spellbreaker | Infcm | All | 5 | 24 | 7.09 |
| World Class Ldr Bd | Access | C | 2 | 22 | 7.09 |
| Pinball Const. Set | EA | Many | 4 | 47 | 7.08 |
| Lode Runner | EA | All | 6 | 60 | 7.07 |
| Sorcerer | Infcm | All | 5 | 58 | 7.07 |
| Phantasie II | SSI | Ap,C | 6 | 36 | 7.07 |
| Enchanter | Infcm | All | 4 | 45 | 7.02 |
| Ultima II | Orign | Ap | 8 | 61 | 7.00 |
| Leather Goddesses | Inf | Many | 2 | 31 | 6.98 |
| Winter Games | Epyx | Many | 1 | 37 | 6.97 |
| Ultima I | Orign | Ap | 2 | 48 | 6.96 |
| Auto Duel | Orign | Ap | 2 | 65 | 6.95 |
| Moebius | Orign | Many | 1 | 21 | 6.95 |
| Deadline | Infcm | Ap,At,I | 3 | 44 | 6.94 |
| Rogue | Epyx | Many | 1 | 26 | 6.92 |
| Galactic Advntres | SSI | Ap,At | 4 | 35 | 6.90 |
| King's Quest II | Sierra | Ap, I | 3 | 20 | 6.88 |
| Hitchhiker's Guide | Infcm | All | 4 | 108 | 6.86 |
| Planetfall | Infcm | All | 3 | 51 | 6.86 |
| Trinity | Infcm | Many | 1 | 22 | 6.82 |
| Summer Games | Epyx | Many | 2 | 35 | 6.79 |
| Wishbringer | Infcm | Many | 3 | 36 | 6.79 |
| Racing Dest Set | EA | C | 3 | 49 | 6.78 |
| Marble Madness | EA | Many | 2 | 20 | 6.71 |
| Phantasie III | SSI | Ap,C,ST | 1 | 20 | 6.70 |
| Hardball | Accld | Many | 7 | 43 | 6.69 |
| Ballblazer | Epyx | At,C | 3 | 66 | 6.68 |
| Adventure Con. Set | EA | Many | 3 | 57 | 6.72 |
| Archon II | EA | C,Ap,At | 4 | 76 | 6.64 |
| Karateka | Brodr | C,Ap,At | 3 | 79 | 6.64 |

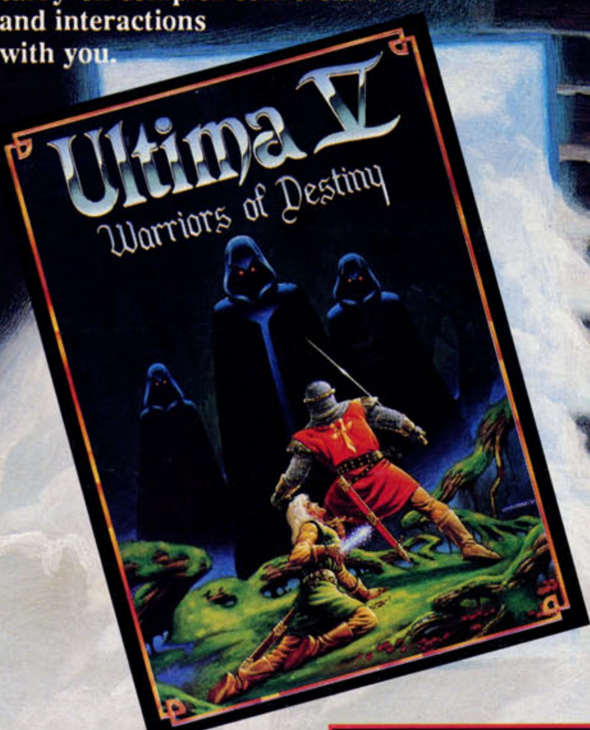
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